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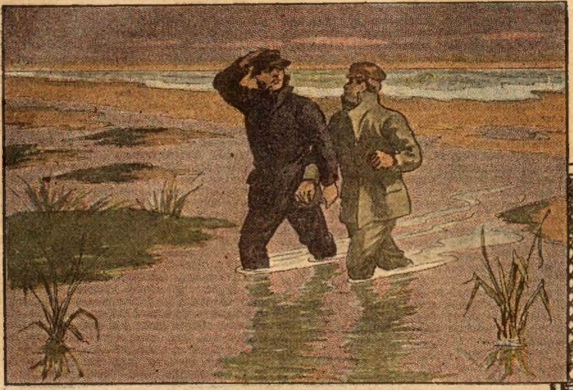
The Lost Multimillionaire

Or, *ADVENTURES IN OSSABAW* :=: By E. W. BATEMAN



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CHAPTER I.

IT WAS growing dark, and I was thinking of going to my boarding-house, when "Dad" Baxley, the city editor, came rushing in, visibly excited, and very much out of breath. We were on our feet in an instant, voicing our curiosity. When he had somewhat recovered his equanimity, he went over and locked the door, and came back to where we were standing.

"Boys, I've got a grand scoop," he said. "It will be the biggest thing this sheet ever pulled off, if we can do it. It's this way: Just before I left the office this afternoon, at four-thirty, Dr. Bates, whom you all know by reputation, and who is a very close friend of mine, called me over the 'phone, requesting that I call at his downtown office on my way home. I did.

"As you all know, he is a specialist on all mental diseases, and his sanitarium out at Blackridge Bluff is one of the best known in the country. And now to the gist of the thing:

"Not a month ago, the most noted patient in the world, perhaps, was brought to him for treatment. Of course, I mean Manston, the multimillionaire. Today, at one-thirty, he escaped, and—"

He paused for breath, while we waited, breathless with excitement for him to finish.

"Well, Bates was at his wits' end as to what to do. If he puts the police on the case, he forfeits the immense bond that he was obliged to deposit for Manston's safety and person. So he has agreed to give me one week for my staff of reporters to find Manston. For this service we alone are to have the story. It will be the scoop of the year if we work secretly; utterly worthless if it becomes known. So you four go to work at once. Jenkins, you have seen him. Go to the Union Terminal Station, and nab him if he tries to board a train. Take Miller with you.

"Sanders, you, too, have seen him. You and Williams take the water-front. Don't watch the ocean liners. I will have the shipping list of those watched. Go to the lower docks and watch the coasters, for I've a notion he will try to break that way. And all of you remember that you have only seven short days to do this stunt in."

And he hurried off with Jenkins and Miller, while Sanders and I remained in the office, looking through the files for a paper with the picture of the man we were seeking.

Just here in this narrative I would say a word of the past life of John Howard Manston, many times a millionaire and entirely insane. He was remarkable in a way, just as any man is who has wrested from the "Street" a pile as big as his. But in the mad scramble after more gold, which he did not really need, he had wrecked his health, and during the terrible heat wave that had swept New York the summer before, leaving death and insanity in its wake, he had become a victim. For weeks he had lain fighting the malady, and as he was slowly recovering, his mind still weak and flighty from the fever, he had gone to a village in northern Maine, hoping to find the absolute quiet needed.

Well, he had found just the opposite, as that particular village was in the throes of a religious revival. Manston had often declared himself to be an atheist, so with a mind impressionable as a child's, he had, while attending one of the services, gathered the idea that he was lost beyond redemption. From brooding over the destination of one's soul to emotional insanity is but a step, and easily taken. His grief-stricken wife and other of his relatives had spent fortunes on him, but he had grown steadily worse. Finally, in desperate straits, his New York physicians had ordered an absolute change of climate and surroundings. He had been brought to Dr. Bates, and here opens our story.

Sanders and I had been keeping fruitless watch for two days of the precious seven, and Sanders had grown surly from constant disappointment and exposure to the awful weather, and while I was not suffering physically, my temper was little better than his.

We were rather late in starting to town, and as we were passing one of the "near-beer" saloons along the water-front, Sanders insisted on going in. I did not drink, but not wishing to become separated from Sanders, I followed him through the doorway into a poorly lighted shop, smelling evilly of sour beer and standing water. The very "feel" of the place sickened me, and I stopped him when he was about halfway to the bar.

"Red," I said, half laughingly and half angrily, "how can a man insult his insides with the vile stuff they sell here? I'm not going to let you do it, and that's all."

"Hush, my boy, or they will surely think you are from the country!" and Red gazed up at me in amused tolerance. I say "up" because I stood six feet two in my stocking feet, while it would have strained Red to measure five feet six inches. "For I will now show you the art of buying good whisky in a "dry" town," he went on. "Well, here goes."

Linking his arm in mine he walked up to the bar, where a dirty Ethiopian was "cork jerker." He had started to reach for the regular variety, but "Red" stopped with a wink. He then drew a star on the top of the bar, and a broad grin spread over the barkeeper's countenance.

"Rye, or corn, boss?" he asked.

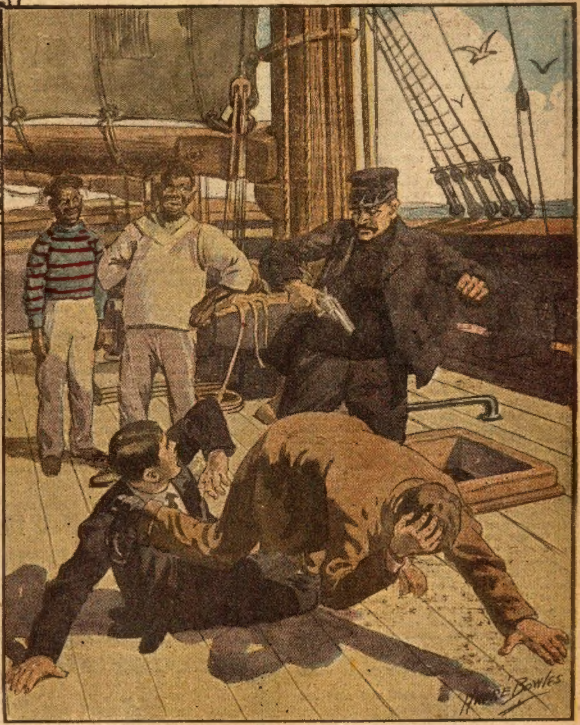
"Rye," was the laconic reply, and the negro disappeared through a rear door that no one ordinarily would have noticed.

He had been gone about half a minute, when a sense of depression swept over me; for the very air in that place was uncanny. Then, for the first time, I looked into a darkened corner and saw two or three negro loafers lounging around, about half-drunk, seemingly. But over beyond them, where he was barely visible, sat a huge half-breed, or "yellow nigger." He looked to me then to be the biggest man I had ever seen; but it was not his size that appalled me, but the look in his eyes almost made me shout. He was looking at me, and I winced under it, for if ever naked savagery shone in a man's face it did in his.

"Red," I whispered, "I was a fool to let you take me anywhere, but doubly a fool to come into this dive with you; so let's clear out, while the clearing is good."

But the bartender had returned to the outer room with a package, so Red just grinned impudently at me, and without a word took the small oblong package and looked inquiringly at the bartender. That worthy grinned and held up one finger. Red dived in his pocket, drew out some small change, and as it was not enough, shoved it back disgustedly and drew out his purse. And right here is where trouble started for us.

Now, though few people know it, reporters are privileged persons in a way. The chief of police in our city had a special form "pass" that he gave the regular "boys" that was very similiar to the one used by his secret service men. With that "pass" you could go into the line of police that guarded a burning building; you could pass the guard at the door of the morgue, or the scene of a murder; indeed almost everywhere the ordinary spectator could not go. No one but such a reporter was fortunate in possessing one, and of course I did not. The "pass" consisted of a heavy pasteboard card about two by four inches in size, and as a general thing, they were mounted on the inside of the owner's purse. Red was no exception, and when he opened his purse the full glare of the feeble gas-jet above the bar seemed to pounce upon it with an evil leer.



Well (though "Red" and I never agreed on it), that barkeeper saw it, and immediately "threw a fit." If he could have read at all, he could not have noticed the difference between the newspaper and plainclothes-officer's pass, as he was a yard or so away. As it was, he could read nothing but a special "Anti-Saloon League" or prohibition "spotter" in Red, and with a howl he dived for a lever that was partly concealed under the rude bar, and which must have controlled the gas feed, for the next instant the room was in total darkness.

Though I was half prepared for something to break loose, this sudden move startled me; as for Red, he was completely bewildered, and did not seem able to move. I had enough presence of mind to spring for a stool that was standing at the other end of the bar. Great minds run in the same channel, no doubt, for when I grasped one leg of that stool some one connected with the other side of it. Well, I put one hundred and eighty-five pounds of good, solid muscle behind a solar-plexus punch, and it landed fair and square.

It was not strange that coon lost all

interest in the stool. I wheeled just in time to duck a blow that whistled by me, and I gave that stool a backhanded swing that stopped on something hard; but as that gentleman hit the floor, I heard the clatter of a knife. This affair was getting ugly. By this time I could make out objects in the room, and I saw that Red was down, and there were three or four more assailants left. And just at that moment they made me out, and with a yell closed in. I sidestepped and swung a number nine shoe full in the groin of the nearest. It was a dirty trick, but the effect was gratifying to me. Yet, it was a fatal mistake, for, as he fell, he grasped me around the ankles with force enough to unbalance me, and as I stumbled the others pounced on me instantly. I struggled desperately and succeeded in getting to my knees, when something struck me an awful clip over the head and the very heavens themselves seemed to have fallen upon me. Again it struck, and ten thousand sparks flew before my eyes—and merciful oblivion closed down.

CHAPTER II.

When I awoke I was aware of only one thing—that I had a big throb of pain where my head should have been. I lay quiet for a moment, trying to think what had happened; but I could not, and tried to rise to my feet. I partially succeeded, but my upraised hands struck a flooring. All the while I was vainly wondering where I was. I began to remember things then, and felt in my pockets for a match, found one, and struck it. No wonder my knees refused to support me, for I was in the hold of a ship! Then I remembered with a vengeance—the fight, that last blow, and then blackest night. Then, a few feet away, I heard a hollow groan. Scared? I was scared stiff, and the next instant I laughed aloud.

"Red," I called softly.

"Will you kindly tell me when the roof fell in?" came in a weak voice out of the darkness.

"Why sure; here's my 'dope' on the subject: When you flashed your "pass," they thought you were a prohibition spotter, and started the fun. That bunch of thugs in the corner, that you didn't see, were regular bouncers. They bounced us good and hard."

"My boy, you have missed your calling; you should have been a logician. Won't you please turn the light of your great reasoning powers on the present situation, and tell me where I am now?"

"Right on the job, there, too. We've been 'Shanghaied;' they found out they had a white elephant on their hands after they knocked us out. If they had killed us, their troubles would have only begun. It would have been worse, on the other hand, if we had got off with a few bruises and a tale of woe for police ears. The consequence is they have dumped us on board some little tub bound for God-knows-where, and made the best of a bad bargain."

Red said nothing, because there was nothing to say; I kept quiet for the same reason. Outside we could hear the oily swish of the great rollers and it was evident that we were running down the coast, for I could hear off in the distance the sullen roar of the breakers.

I was thinking, and thinking hard; and the more I thought of this affair, the more despondent I became. Our attempt at finding a stray millionaire had turned out a lamentable failure, if there ever was one. We had lost all chance to get our story, and by this escapade we would beyond all doubt lose our jobs, if we ever did get close enough to them again. And I was thinking dully, what a pleasurable sensation it would be to kick Red until he promised to let "wild-cat" whisky alone, when there was a scraping noise overheard, a patch of daylight appeared, and a gruff voice gave a short command. A lantern swung in the opening, and a rope ladder dropped down just clear of the floor. Then came that great voice addressing us:

"Hey, you blighters, roll out and let me get a peep at you."

That was quite plain and we rolled.

"Red," I whispered, as we paused an instant at the foot of the ladder "that voice belongs to a whale of a man. Don't start any thing when you get on deck."

I went up first, and just as I reached the deck the ship took a violent roll and I pitched head-foremost into the man holding the light. We rolled fully ten feet across the deck, and when we finally righted, sat facing each other. For a moment I was bewildered, and then I simply howled with laughter! My "whale of a man" was a little scrap of humanity not as large as Red, and at that moment was cursing me in deep bass, with the most complete vocabulary I have ever heard. He regained his feet and with a lightning-quick movement, whipped out a gun and covered me. I sat still and quit laughing.

"You big, fire-eating blockhead!" he roared. "What d'ye mean, tryin' to butt me off my own deck? I've a mind to kill you as you are!"

He raved and swore till I actually thought he would kill me then and there. But there was a distraction among the crew aft, and finally one of the group beckoned him wildly and he hurried toward them. That gave me a breathing spell, and I ventured to rise and take a look at things.

The vessel was a small affair, being one of those little tramp coasters that are used to market the coast oysters, and when the oyster season is closed, are almost anything. This particular one was manned by as villainous-looking a crew of negroes as I had ever seen. There were a couple of them, guarding Red over by the mast, and I looked them over carefully.

But it was not until they spoke that I understood; for I had not been raised in southeast Georgia for nothing. It was that senseless jargon that distinguished the "seacoast," or "rice-eatin' nigger," as my black mammy called them, from his brother of the towns and farms, and I could tell nothing they said.

I then turned my attention to the surroundings. It was nearing sundown, and in the southwest a lowering cloud, or "thunderhead," was muttering away, giving promise of bad weather. Directly to the west of us, about a mile away, I could dimly make out a white stretch of beach, for a fog was gathering as twilight came. But just at that moment, I was rudely interrupted in my thoughts by the voice of the skipper.

"Come aft, you slob," he said, and beckoned with his gun.

Now, I have always argued, that when a man is looking down the business end of a gun he is more or less sick. I went. When I reached his side he merely pointed seaward. I looked, but at first could see nothing. Then, I could have shouted for joy; for I could make out a black ribbon of smoke trailing out above the sky-line. That could mean but one thing; nothing but a revenue cutter would be far from the regular line of traffic in good weather. He quickly noted the look of relief in my face, and when he spoke his voice was a little kinder in tone than before.

"Well, lad, they've got me dead to rights. I ran into this land-lock to dodge the blow, and he's coming in on top of me for the same reason. I've either got to stay and be searched—as I'm a whisky-runner—or take my chances of getting by him. And even if I did dodge him, how long would this tub last in an open sea, with a howling gale on the job? I'm going to stay and be searched. So I must lose my passengers at once, by some means. There are but two ways; either to rap you on the head and send you to the bottom at once, or to give you a boat and let you send yourselves there," and he turned and motioned to Red.

"Decide between you, but do it quickly," and he walked a few paces away.

"Red," I whispered, when he had with some difficulty reached my side, for the ship was rolling heavily, "he has given us a choice of dying—a speedy death at the hands of the crew, or a more lingering one by trying to make shore in that shell," and I pointed at the merest apology of a rowboat slung alongside. "Rather a grim joke, isn't it?"

Red did not answer at once, for he was looking shoreward. The wind had risen, and the long swells were chopped into hissing, curling wreaths of green water that struck the ship with an angry swish; and growing louder every moment was the muttering of the storm.

"He wouldn't dare fire a gun. What chance have we in a hand-to-hand fight?"

"None whatever. He has but to speak the word and these colored gentlemen would do the rest with their little knives. Can you swim?"

"Yes."

"Then we'll go that way, if we must go. There is but one thing in our favor; there are no breakers and the shore is sandy."

But even at that it was a desperate chance, and I almost regretted it when I called out to the captain: "We'll take the boat, sir."

He immediately gave a short command, and the boat swung over the side, where it danced and bobbed like a cork. It was little bigger comparatively, and I almost wanted to laugh, when I thought what it had to do. From the looks of it, a trip across an ordinary millpond would have been a difficult undertaking. And through that surf! The shore was fully a mile away, and night was falling fast.

"We must hurry," I said, and leading the way, I floundered across the deck and dropped over the side into the boat. Without a word Red followed, the negro holding the stay-rope let go, and we were off.

And just at that moment luck favored us for that dead calm that precedes a storm came, though the sea was still uneasy.

"Pull for that skin of yours, Red!" I shouted. "We still have a chance."

And pull we did. River-raised as I had been, to pull an oar was second nature with me. And Red? Where he learned I never knew, but he rowed with the precision of a master. And we were making fine headway, fairly eating up the first quarter of the journey, when a gentle breeze struck my cheek. I looked at Red, and he nodded understandingly. It had been a desperate chance, and we had lost—the calm was over.

"Don't give up, lad," he said; "we've got a half-chance yet."

And that little boat rocked with the impetus our next stroke gave it. And as if to meet our efforts with mockery, the next puff of wind was stronger than the first. The succeeding one topped that one, and on and on, until it had reached a steady roar that almost took our breath. We were simply "fighting" our oars now, pulling with the strength and courage that is born of despair. Inch by inch we crept shoreward, with the gale blowing harder and harder. Now we were halfway, and we could see the beach glowing soft white in the twilight. Dared we hope?

And it was as if Fate itself had answered, for on the next stroke my oar twisted and snapped with a crack like a pistol shot. Thrown off balance the little craft veered suddenly, and before Red could recover, had slipped into the "trough" of two mighty waves. They seemed to pause a moment, as if to enjoy their triumph, and then, with a thunderous roar, they closed in, and the next instant I was in the water, fighting for breath.

The rest has always been a confused memory to me. But I can never forget the horror of it; the awful lashing of that ice-cold water as I fought through it. How long it was I never knew, but I remembered that there were several times when I wanted to give up, but I could see Red's head, fighting along just ahead of me, and the sight of it kept me going. And then, after strength and hope were completely gone, a great wave gathered me on its very crest and dashed me headlong into something hard and white; and then the blackness of eternal night seemed to engulf me, and I knew no more.

CHAPTER III.

The drenching rain must have revived me, for I awoke thoroughly chilled. I tried to regain my feet, but fell back with a groan; my right leg was hurt in some way.

I could see nothing of Red, so I pulled myself into a sitting posture and halloed. The moon had risen behind the clouds, shedding a ghostly light, and by it I could see that I had reached the beach; again I gave a call. This time, a short way down the beach, came an answer, and in a few minutes Red joined me. He had been a short way down the beach in an effort to find some way to reach shelter. But he had found none, and had been afraid to venture inland for fear he would not be able to find his way back to me. He had reached the shore somewhat out of breath, but unhurt. I had no such good fortune, being dashed upon the beach by that monster wave, and the force of the fall had rendered me unconscious. He had found me and carried me above the water-mark, and had gone on his exploring expedition.

It behooved us to start somewhere at once, and we decided to keep a straight course inland, until we struck some sign of habitation. Red helped me to my feet, and I swayed unsteadily on one leg, the pain in the other being intolerable. But by leaning on his left shoulder we could make fairly good progress; so we went forward up the beach. It rose gradually up from the sea, and when we had reached the top of the slope where we might see the surrounding country, Red almost collapsed at the awfulness of it.

"For God's sake what is it?" he asked in an awed whisper.

"Red," I answered, and my voice sounded solemn in that vast waste, "we are standing on the threshold of the country of dead hopes, poverty, and despair. We are either on one of the islands or the mainland of Georgia's rice country."

Then, I told him briefly, what is now ancient history—how, in the days before the war this was one of the most prosperous sections in the South. It was peculiarly adapted for the raising of rice, and its numerous streams had more than furnished the necessary irrigation but emancipation had almost depopulated the country, for the negroes had preferred to move to the more southern parts of the State, in order to find a milder climate and more pleasant work than cultivating rice. Then followed, in later years, the blow that swept way the last vestige of the rice industry in Georgia—railroad development. With railroads intersecting the country the fields could no longer be flooded, and though carried into all the courts of the land, the railroad's right of "eminent domain" was only more firmly established.

And now all that remains of those mighty estates, almost feudal in their scope, is miles and miles of desolate country, flooded with water to a depth of twelve and fourteen inches, with only the higher plateaux planted in Sea-Island cotton. In this manner the few inhabitants eke out a living, and the landowners either have let the ruined lands revert to the commonwealth, or have sold out for a nominal sum. A very few remained to live and die in the land of their forefathers. The main population are the itinerant fishermen, or the "Ogeechee" negroes, as they are sometimes called. They are a wild, indolent people, with no bent whatever to agriculture; intensely religious and superstitious, and almost savage in their customs. They are segregated from the other inhabitants to a marked degree; in fact most of them live on the islands that lie just off the mainland.

"Now, Red" I said, after my story was finished, "we are either on Ossabaw, St. Catherine, or Blackbeard Island, or the mainland. But I am inclined to think it is one of the islands, for the mainland is nothing like as wild as this."

Red stood transfixed, as though the scene was past all understanding. And even to me it presented a weird look, though I had often heard tales of this strange land with its stranger water-deserts.

Finally, as the moon came from behind the clouds, I could see—so sharp was the contrast with this soggy barren waste before us—a line of trees that seemed to belt the horizon.

"Red," I said, "do you see that line of trees? That can mean but one thing; and that thing is a turnpike. You see in this country they have to build roads several feet above the rice-fields, now they have been abandoned. And only on the side of the roads and in the swamps can a tree live, and those trees grow too thinly for a swamp. If we can make the road, it will be easy sledding to find a habitation of some sort."

My words sounded cheerful enough, but there was that in the scene that knocked the optimism out of one. Suppose we fought our way to that line of trees and found a swamp for our pains? For what I had said was purely surmise, and I was totally ignorant of what we might really find. Red felt the depression as strongly as I, and it was a silent pair that went slowly splashing their way on the first lap of that awful journey.

I awake at night sometimes, when the horrors of that night came back to me in my dreams. Even now, how vivid the impression is! The awful pain that each hobbling step brought me, and Red at my side, with set jaw, gasping for breath under the double load! How, at intervals when I was half-delirious, I begged Red to leave me to die, and for him to go on alone; and with superhuman strength he would almost carry me until the pain was easier, and my head grew clear again. When I relate this part of the tale Red always says that any man would have done the same, but I simply laugh and tell him, if he doesn't like my version, to write one to suit himself. But to return to our story.

A wind from the north had risen, and it was biting cold. As we struggled on, the exposure and lack of food told heavily on both of us. Hours passed, and yet the trees seemed little nearer. How Red stood it I will never know, for the strain on him was double. I know that many times I thought death

Man and His Shoes.

How much a man is like his shoes!
For instance, both a sole may lose;
Both have been tanned; both are made tight
By cobblers; both get left and right,
Both need a mate to be complete,
And both are made to go on feet.
They both need heeling, oft are sold,
And both in time will turn to mold.
With shoes the last is first; with men
The first shall be the last; when
The shoes wear out they're mended new.
When men wear out they're men dead, too!
They both are trod upon, and both
Will tread on others nothing loath;
Both have their ties, and both incline,
When polished, in the world to shine;
And both peg out. Now, would you choose
To be a man or be his shoes?

would have been a merciful relief. When we did reach the trees I could not remember, and Red told afterward that I was almost unconscious when he burst through the few feet of undergrowth and found—the road!

When I came to earth again the moon had almost set. Red was stretched full length beside me, and I stirred him gently. He was on his feet in an instant.

"Williams," he said, and there was new hope in his voice, "this is a fairly well used road, and is bound by the natural law of things to have two ends to it; we're going to find one end. This road runs east and west. Which direction must we take?"

"West, by all means," I answered, "for that is the general direction towards civilization."

Without a word he helped me rise, and we started again. And what a difference! We almost made as good time as if I had not been hurt. It is needless to say that our spirits rose perceptibly, and yet, nature was beginning to assert herself very forcibly, for I could feel that deadly inertia of a snapped nerve tension stealing over me. Red was even worse than I was, for I could feel his steps grow short and jerky, and I knew that nothing but his will power alone was keeping him going.

We had gone something like three miles, when suddenly we emerged into a small clearing, and—lo and behold!—a house. With a cry of joy on our lips we stumbled rapidly over the remaining yards to the gate and into the yard. But a sense of oddness about it then struck us, and we halted halfway up the walk. It was a very ordinary country cottage, and conformed in general appearance to many others that I had seen, so it was not that which impressed me forcibly. Then I realized what it was.

Nothing had stirred or moved around the place since we had stopped. Absolute, ominous silence seemed to entomb the entire surroundings. Red laughed a little nervously, and linking his arm in mine we stepped up on the the little porch, and he rapped sharply on the door. Silence answered him. Again he rapped louder than before. More silence. He called, and the echoes answered mockingly. I stilled a hysterical desire to laugh.

"Red," I whispered, "it's dead, all dead. Nothing in this whole country is alive."

"Let's go around to the rear and see if we can't find out something about it," he answered. And he went ahead and I limped along behind him.

But around there it was the same. He hammered on the doors and windows, shouted, threw rocks on the roof, but all in vain; there was no one there. Yet all around us were signs of very recent habitation. Stretching away for quite a distance was a cotton-field; more evident still, a pile of freshly-cut wood within a few feet of us; in fact, everything pointed to the fact that some one had been there recently. Yet not a dog had barked, there were no poultry in sight; no live stock had stirred in the lot close by. Nothing but the deadly quiet of desertion.

"There is but one of two alternatives; break in or move on," I said, after several more minutes of silence.

Red stood a moment, undecided. When he spoke, his voice had a curious note in it.

"Williams, there is something back of this neither of us understands. Something sinister threatening. Tell me, is it the custom of country folk to take the whole family and all the "rolling stock" when they go visiting?"

"Quite the contrary. They are very careless and unsuspecting in such things, and usually leave everything where a first-class burglar or cattle-thief could make an easy haul."

"Then we must go on," he said. "Under usual conditions we could no doubt make free with this house, but now—well, something seems to tell me that we had better go on. We're bound to find some one on this road, and if we don't, we know the way back here."

And with that he hastened back to the road, and I followed him as fast as a game leg would allow.

Now, I'm frank enough to confess that had it been left with me, I would have lain down on that little porch and gone to sleep, while waiting for the owners to return and give me a more certain welcome. But as Red was entirely puzzled and not a little depressed with this sudden turn of luck, I said nothing. He was waiting at the roadside for me, and without a word we started again. By this time the pain in my leg was not so sharp, and I leaned but little on his shoulder.

Minutes soon grew into an hour, and we had left the deserted house far behind. The moon was almost down, though, and the road was in black darkness. Then to the right of us appeared a small cotton-field. Red quickened his pace; then a small bit of woods, another and larger field—another house! Red was almost running now, and I was forced to fall behind. So it happened that I never entered the yard, for as I was about to enter the gate, Red came running out, almost frantic in his haste.

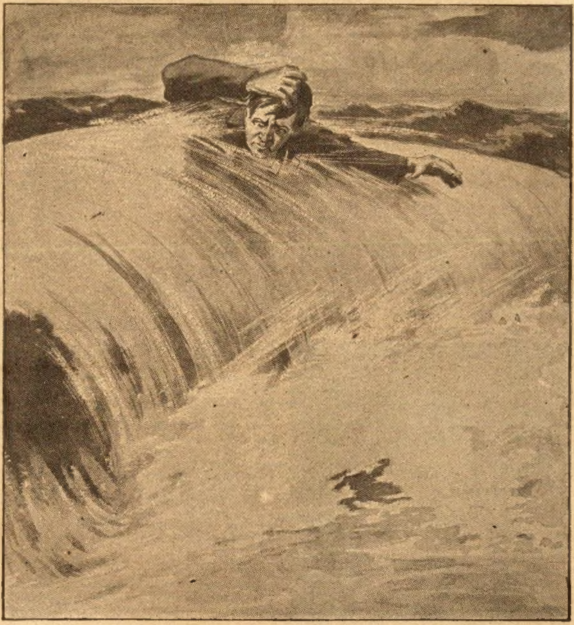
"God!" was all he said, as he stood before me shaking like a leaf. I listened a moment, and then fear, deadly fear, seized me. Never had I felt the awfulness, the deathlike silence of that scene.

With a shriek that shattered the silence like the Last Trumpet Call I turned and ran! Ran as I had never run before, and from what, I knew not. I forgot my hurt, forgot everything in that mad race with the Thing Intangible that pursued me. When I could run no more, I threw myself on the ground sobbing for breath, and I knew Red was there beside me. But in a moment I was up and running for dear life, with Red sticking behind me like a shadow. On and on we went, pausing only when breath forsook us. A house flashed by as silent and forbidding as its predecessors. With never a backward look we rushed on. Another, and we paused a moment before it. Silence answered us, louder than the roar of thunder. With new impetus, we sped onward.

How long we kept at it, or the distance we covered, we never knew. But it must have been considerable, for as we rounded a sharp turn of the road, our eyes swept over a scene that brought us up short.

If fear had left me any reason, amazement took what was left. There on a hill, not fifty yards away, stood a big two-story house, in its usual Colonial setting of trees. It was not the house that amazed me, however. The front of the house was brilliantly lighted! Every window seemed to beckon with its friendly shaft of light, while the big double doors, open wide, told us the story of a warm welcome from within.

I stood open-mouthed, marveling. Could this be a mirage of my disordered senses? I turned to Red, just in time to see him crumple limply in his tracks. Then I knew it could be no mistake.



A great wave gathered me on its crest.

But the shock of it had been too much for his overwrought nerves and tired body, and the very pity of his plight aroused something within me. With a single motion I raised him in my arms and staggered forward to the short driveway that led to the house.

The very weakness of death itself seemed to be dragging at my limbs, and I feared I would never reach the steps. Yet, reach them I did, and up them I fought one by one. An when I reached the top, I stood for a moment blinded by the bright glare of the light. When I could see again, there standing in the door was a woman, "wondrous, beautiful." I was certain now that my eyes were deceiving me, and I stood staring stupidly, waiting for the vision to pass, when she spoke.

"You are welcome, sir," and her voice was like the voice of an angel.

"Your companion seems hurt, too. Will you not come in?"

I could only stand and stare dumbly at her, as if I could never understand. My brain was one vast jumble of impressions, and yet, I could not get any definite thought fixed in my head. Finally, I stepped mechanically into the hall, and let Red drop gently to the floor. Relieved of his weight, my brain cleared a moment, but my voice sounded very far away when I turned to her and spoke.

"I beg your pardon, madam, first for not speaking and for intruding our presence on you. But how we came here is a long story, and I am very weary. I think——" and then the lights started round me slowly, then faster and faster, until the whole hall was a blur of light. And then they went out altogether.

This story, developing very thrilling happenings, will be continued in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year; it is worth many times that amount. Send in your subscription, for many great stories that you cannot afford to miss will appear during the coming months.

* * *

FALSE PRETENSES.

Being in Texas, Chalybeate Springs partakes topographically and climatically of the characteristics of the Lone Star State. It is rugged and charming, and the moon is the real Texas moon. But most of the local color is imported.

The adjacent territory is not, suitable either for farming or ranching, consequently there is a woeful lack of native "types," and as the patrons of the springs are mostly Easterners and demand to meet Western types, the banditti who keep the hotels customarily hire these types in St. Louis or Chicago, giving them board and lodging and a little spending money to pose around in picturesque attire and attitude.

Hence we have Charles Everett Jamison, known to the laity as "a young cattleman, son of old Jamison of Jamison's ranch—out West, somewhere—and oodles of money."

To Pete Gillis, proprietor of the Phoenix Hotel and Jamison's employer, he was privately known as Charley James, sometime leading juvenile in a No. 6 "Golden West" company that had stranded and disbanded in Fort Worth. There Gillis had met Jamison, conceived his innocent plan of deception, and employed him at fifty dollars a month and keep to play the cowboy heir for the summer season. James was a handsome young fellow of 26, fairly well educated, and possessed of sound though not puritanical morals.

Among the guests that sought shelter and diversion in the hospitable precincts of the Phoenix Hotel was a large, square-rigged matron who registered as "Mrs. Palmerstron, Chicago." She exuded opulence. In her war paint, diamonds and gorgeous gowns, she looked as splendid as a battleship dressed for presidential review. And it got to be bruited about that she was one of the Chicago porkerage, with worlds of money and only one incumbrance—a bewitchingly beautiful daughter, Genevieve, who was 20, with all the health and charm and grace and naive understanding of man and his works that her age implies. She averaged two proposals a day.

Jamison was fascinated by Genevieve from the first. Yet it was one thing, he felt to masquerade for the delectation of a lot of would-be fashionables, but another thing to deceive an innocent and trusting young girl.

She evidently thought well of him and gave him countless oportunities to prosecute his wooing—had he intended to woo. But whenever he gazed into the depths of her infantile eyes, touched for a moment her little hand or had a stray tress of her spun gold hair blown his way he loathed himself and his position with all the power of his clean young heart.

"It's a beastly game!" he said to himself. "Downright low, and I'm a cad to keep it up. I shan't keep it up! I'll tell her the truth."

But under certain circumstances the truth is difficult to tell. In the present instance it was peculiarly so.

He temporized. Gillis had hinted to him more than once that he was neglecting the other girls in the hotel for Miss Palmerston.

"It ain't right!" protested Gillis. "Here I hire you to entertain all my single wimmin guests, and you go gallivantin' round with Miss Palmerston all the time. It ain't as if she's a wall flower—she'll not be neglected. Give the man guests a chance. Now, there's Miss Underwood. Bushels o' money and in toler'ble repair. She don't seem to draw; go spark her up some!"

Acting upon these instructions, Jamison "sparked up" the neglected Miss Underwood and naturally aroused the jealousy and determination of Miss Palmerston to a pitch of desperate intensity.

She contrived to meet him at a time and in a place where they would not be interrupted, and there informed him that she disliked him, did not approve of his conduct and would never speak to him again, so there! After which she fell into his arms and had him tell her with repetition and variations that he loved her more than anything else in the world.

"But it can never be!" he cried sepulchrally, pushing her away from him. "Genevieve, I have basely deceived you! I am not——"

Clasping her hands upon her heaving bosom and staggering back toward left center, she gasped: "You do not mean—that there is—another?'

"No, dear, not that," he exclaimed passionately. "There is not another woman in the world! Only you! But—it is a long and shameful story."

She seated herself upon a mossy bowlder, well up stage. Hat in hand, he threw himself into a graceful posture at her feet. Then in low, tense tones he began: "I am an unspeakable cad. I deserve that you should hate me, as I am sure you will when you have heard what I have to say." And he told her the whole miserable truth.

At the conclusion of his painful story, as he sat like a condemned criminal awaiting the sentence of death, she astounded him by bursting into a fit of uncontrollable laughter. Had his recital driven her mad? He started up in alarm, but she waved him back. At last she controlled her mirth and said: "You base impostor! You pretender! You dreadful beguiler of innocent girlhood! How dare you?"

"I know it! I did! But I'm not——" he seemed to choke in his incoherency. "But it's a tragedy. It is not to be laughed at!" he said, recovering himself as she broke into a fresh spasm of merriment.

"Why, you old counterfeit!" exclaimed Miss Palmerston. "It is the most excruciating joke! Still, I'm not a Chicago heiress any more than you are a rich ranchman's son. I'm Genevieve Palmer, late of the 'Dollar Dora' company. We broke up in Denver and Aunt Lizzie Palmer, who always travels with me, suggested this masquerade for the fun that we might get out of it. It was no end of a picnic until you came along—then it became serious. However, I determined that you should propose, and then I'd tell you the truth and see if you really cared. And then——"

"Then what?" asked James.

"Then—whatever you say goes."

"I say sweetheart, let's get married immediately," was his response.

"Well, let's!" she said. "But won't Aunt Lizzie be dumfounded?"

However, Aunt Lizzie was not so shocked as they had anticipated. "Why, you silly children!" she said. "I know you'll be happy and prosperous, and I'll invite you to come and visit me here next summer. You see, I am going to marry Mr. Gillis!"

* * *

Unsuccessful Salesman.

The young man who was down and out to the point of desperation was offered a job by an installment house. This house made a specialty of eight-day clocks, which could be had for small payment down and a small payment each week. The young man admitted that he never had tried canvassing, but with one of the large clocks under his arm he gamely started out to make house-to-house visits.

At the first house a hard-faced woman met him at the door. The young man downed the lump in his throat and asked nervously:

"Madam, have you a clock?"

"Yes, I've got a clock," snapped the woman, surmising the mission of the canvasser.

Her riotous response completely unnerved the new canvasser.

"All right, all right," he answered quickly. "Will you tell me the time? I want to set this one."

Then he went back and quit.

* * *

But a man never keeps on being crazy over a woman very long after she begins to act crazy over him.

The Diamond Mouse

Or, THE BLACK DOCTOR'S PLOT By Captain Jack Judson

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CHAPTER XVII.

MINISTER AND GALLEY BIRD.

WHILST Sylvan was riding back to Ravenswood, Doctor Gurth of Graystone was preparing for the last bold stroke of his career. The specious falsehood which Dragon had spun after his errand to Richmond had found credence by his master. The Black Doctor believed that Halco, the dwarf, was out of the way with whatever he knew, and, safe on this score, he assumed an air of triumph which brought a certain brightness to his eyes. Dragon revealed nothing of his visit to the Reverend Harold Basil, and the story of the almost suicide was therefore unknown at Graystone.

When Doctor Gurth reached the minister's house on the fated night he was surprised to find him in genial spirits. He had driven to the river and crossed by old Jasper's ferry, after which he walked to the parson's humble abode.

"You are ready?" he said, watching the minister closely. "This is to be the happiest night of my life."

"Wedding nights should always be fraught with joy," was the reply, as the speaker's face kindled with something akin to pleasure. "There seems to be no escape for me."

"None at all unless you prove troublesome," answered the Black Doctor.

What had come over Harold Basil after his language to Dragon? Had he resolved to unite Estelle to this man of evil, thus blighting her whole future and casting round about Ravenswood a gloom which would never be dissipated? His declaration that he would go back to the prison cell before any word of his should perform the hateful service seemed but a boast. Had the man weakened at the last moment and thrown himself into the power of the Man of Graystone?

"Come!" said Doctor Gurth. "We have but little time. The lady is waiting."

Harold Basil put on his coat and led the way from the house. His face was strangely white. If the Black Doctor had cast his eyes downward he would have noticed that the long slender hands were tightly clenched, as though the minister were laboring under some tremendous mental strain. They walked side by side through the timber with the moonbeams now and then falling aslant upon their faces. Harold Basil cast sharp glances at his companion, but he did not speak.

"I fancy, after all, you don't like this service?" said Doctor Gurth at length.

The other one started. "I must confess it is not a service of my making," he said, beating down certain words which almost found vent.

The Black Doctor allowed a smile to sweep across his face. "But it's better than going back to the old place, eh?"

"Almost anything is better than that."

"I should think so."

The minister raised his hand and let it fall upon the Doctor's arm.

"How would you like to return to your old place?" he asked, watching the face at his side.

"What do you mean?" The face already dark grew darker under a scowl.

"Do you forget so easily?" asked Harold Basil. "Is it possible that you have torn that one chapter from your recollection? Men may mutilate the book of life, but the spoiling of it when they tear out a leaf leaves a sting behind."

The next moment Doctor Gurth stopped in his tracks and faced the cool, calm man beside him.

"You know nothing," said he, boastingly. "No game at this time, Mr. Harold Basil, so-called."

There was venom in his last words and the arrow went home.

"I know nothing!" and the minister laughed. "Look me in the face, Doctor Gurth."

"I am doing that now!"

"Have you no recollection of the galleys? No remembrance of the pest houses of Guiana? Is it possible that you forget the doctor who was branded in a far country, and who waited for years on the desert shores of a demon land for a sail? Where have you hidden the memory of a past which all men would blot from their history? You must be more than man if you can do this."

The face of the Black Doctor grew almost white.

"Who told you this?" he cried.

"Who but one who knows?" answered Harold Basil. "Dare you look me in the face, wicked as I have been, and tell me that what I have hinted at is a lie?"

"Dare you fling this to the world?" hissed the Man of Graystone. "Will you, a man who has worn stripes, go forth and proclaim what you have said to this neighborhood?"

"The very winds may be whispering it before dawn."

There was no tremor in the tones which reached Doctor Gurth's ears.

"Man," he exclaimed, clutching Harold Basil's arm, "you know what a still tongue means. You do not yet know what I am."

"I know what I am not, though I have been bad—an ex-galley slave!"

The hand tightened its grip until Harold Basil thought he could feel the fingers encircling the bone. The light which had flashed up in Doctor Gurth's eyes was the threatening of one who could strike. But Harold Basil knew that upon that night he was safe.

"Pish!" suddenly broke out the Black Doctor. "A truce to this. You cannot get me to release you."

"Who asks release?"

"You were playing for it," was the retort.

"Because I referred to life in the old galleys? A man's face should not wear a scowl on his wedding night."

The Black Doctor shrugged his shoulders. "Silence, then! We shall soon be there."

Harold Basil looked at him a long minute in silence. "What is this I hear about the loss of the Diamond Mouse?" he suddenly asked.

"You have heard of it, then?"

"Yes, and about the death of Lady Constance."

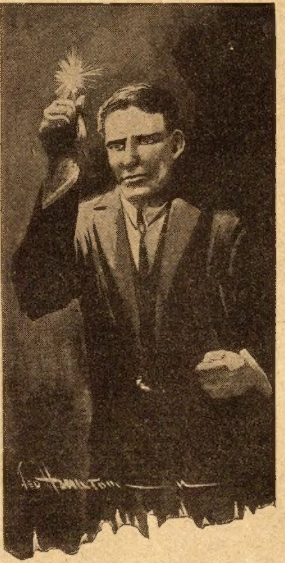
"Anything more?" and the speaker's lip curled derisively.

"A little more," said Harold Basil, in the same exasperating manner. "There is the White Woman who comes and goes at intervals, the woman who from time immemorial, if one can believe such stories, appears before the theft of the Mouse, which came down to Lady Constance from the days of Prince Charlie. What about the White Woman, Doctor Gurth?"

The only answer was a clenching of a pair of dark hands and another flashing of two eyes beneath a brace of beetle brows.

"If it weren't my wedding night I'd rob your flock of a shepherd!" Doctor Gurth hissed, with all his passion paramount. "In doing so I'd also rob the State of a prison bird."

A strange laugh rippled over the minister's lips. "Would it be the first time you had killed?" he asked.



Then the match flared up.

"Stop!"

"Ravenswood is just yonder among the trees," continued Harold Basil. "The altar is set among the pines where Lady Constance died. I presume we shall find in the marriage chamber the table upon which she signed that hated document which gave the dove to the eagle. When you left the old galleys, did you leave your dark powers of hypnotism behind, or did you bring them with you to America?"

This bolt was more than the Black Doctor could stand. His hand flew to the minister's throat, and Harold Basil was borne backward and almost off his feet.

"I'll make your flock shepherdless!" he cried. "Perchance you'd like that better than going back to the treadmill of crime."

"Once a hawk always one!" smiled Harold Basil.

The hand at his throat fell away as suddenly as it had seized it.

"No, not now," said the Black Doctor.

They resumed their walk. The house was not far off now, for the path had turned from the river, and in a few moments Ravenswood would be in sight.

"You've got your book, eh, Mr. Basil?"

The minister tapped the side of his cloak.

"I guess we're two old birds," laughed Doctor Gurth.

"But not two galley birds," was the sarcastic rejoinder.

"It is a distinction with a little difference. Ho, ho! my dear Mr. Basil. The wedding fee shall be ample. Why, you may even kiss the bride."

"May God pity her if lips like yours defile her pure soul!"

It was a ringing laugh which followed these words. It echoed through the wooded aisles, and came back to the two men like a sound from the bottomless pit. This was the laugh which fell upon Sylvan's ears, when he and Selina, the octoroon, stood at the riverside with the bloodhound held in leash by the young man.

The next moment there was the patter of feet among the leaves, and Doctor Gurth, seizing the minister's wrist, darted away with a half-articulated cry rising from his throat.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN THE DARK.

Sylvan and Selina reached the spot from which the laugh had come in time to catch a glimpse of figures vanishing among the dark shadows of the trees.

"He is gone!" cried the young man, turning to his companion. "It was the Black Doctor."

The octoroon clasped her hands in a spasm of fear.

"Now for Estelle, for the Black Doctor will find no altar prepared for him," Sylvan went on.

They turned back to the river. The bloodhound ran along the bank sniffing the air and looking into the heavy mists, as though he would find somewhere within their folds the missing mistress of Ravenswood.

"She would not seek the stream unless driven insane by the plots of that wretch!" exclaimed the young Virginian. "Estelle promised to wait for me. It was my misfortune that I could not sooner come."

Up and down the slippery bank went the two hunters.

"Look!" suddenly cried the girl, clutching Sylvan's arm as she pointed away. "Behold the White Woman, Master Sylvan."

The young man leaned forward with bated breath.

"It is the creature who calls herself Vashti, as you have told me," he muttered.

"Yes, yes," in low tones from the startled girl.

In a spot which the moonbeams touched with fairy fingers stood the spectral-like object which had caught Selina's eye. Sylvan glided forward with the least noise possible and halted within a few feet of her. There was something uncanny in the sight. Vashi stood erect with her damp drapery clinging to her slender form and her classic face as white as the mists which partly enveloped it.

"Vashti?"

At the sound of Sylvan's voice the White Woman of Graystone started and turned her face toward his. In another second the young man was at her side and his hand well upon her arm.

"Estelle?" said he.

Vashti drew back the full length of his arm and remained silent.

"You know," demanded Sylvan. "Where is Estelle?"

"Come!" answered the White Woman, in low tones.

Sylvan and Selina followed at her heels. Along the shore she flitted with a hand at her lips, and at last paused and pointed at a small shack which was crumbling near the water's edge. Into the crazy structure bounded the young man and stopped before an object which sent his blood cold through his veins.

"My love! my love!" he exclaimed, bending over a form which lay on a pallet of straw.

The white-faced mistress of Ravenswood raised her head and put up her arms.

"At last!" came tremblingly from her lips.

Sylvan pressed her to his heart and smoothed back the tresses which had straggled in wild abandon over her face.

"I found her in the woods," said Vashti. "It was good that I came when I did."

Sylvan understood. It was no task for him to take Estelle in his arms and turn toward the door of the shack.

"Now for life, love, and vengeance!" the two women heard him say.

He bolted away with Estelle pressed against him, and Vashi and Selina trailed after him in dead silence. Over the path which led to Ravenswood hurried Sylvan, his eyes aflame with battle and his hands itching to have it out with the Man of Graystone.

He soon crossed the porch with his burden and opened the great door of the manor house. Darkness hit him in the face like a giant's hand. There was a stillness in the house which crept into the hearts of all.

Sylvan carried Estelle to her chamber, where Selina struck a light, and then he laid his burden with a lover's tenderness upon the couch.

"She is yours now," he said turning to the octoroon. "I shall seek the wolf."

He raced downstairs in the semi-darkness, and came to a sudden halt at the foot. What had become of Doctor Gurth? He opened the door of the red parlor and stepped inside. The gloom was almost palpable there. With a lucifer in his hand, Sylvan turned to the nearest wall and was about to strike a light, when he heard a voice from near at hand.

"Is it you, Dragon?"

The name startled the one who heard. The match flared up, and Sylvan, glaring over its little light, beheld the Man of Graystone. He stood in the middle of the room, and in one of his hands was a pistol which his dark fingers clutched with the desperation of a Camorran brought to bay.

"So it is you?" came from the welded lips of Doctor Gurth.

"For whom else were you looking?" cried Sylvan.

The light at that moment flickered out, but Sylvan threw himself against the door and waited.

"It may as well be in the dark as elsewhere," he heard the Black Doctor say. "A light will show me where to plant my lead."

"In the dark be it!" was the reply.

There was a footstep beyond the door, but Sylvan heeded it not. With every nerve at its utmost tension he waited for the next move from the man who confronted him in the red parlor. The silence that had fallen about them was fraught with fate.

On the soft carpet Sylvan heard no noise. If the Black Doctor had moved, his ears had not caught the slightest intimation of it. To meet his enemy in the dark was not his intention. He wanted to come face to face within the full glare of a light, so that the battle might be equal. But in the dark, and cooped up with a man who knew all the hellish arts of crime, who had powers next to supernatural, lent a one-sidedness to the contest which sent a thrill of terror to Sylvan's soul.

All at once there greeted him a strange and overpowering perfume which made his senses reel. It seemed to penerate to the innermost recesses of his nature, a strong weapon against which he could not contend. If he could have penetrated the surrounding gloom he would have seen Doctor Gurth holding above his head a small vial from which leaped a spray which sent abroad that terrible agent in which he was dealing.

Sylvan felt consciousness leaving him. Vainly, with all his strength, did he battle against the subtle weapon. He thought of Estelle, of the plots which Doctor Gurth had formed, and his mind went back to his adventures in Richmond, the puncture in the hand, and the talks with Mrs. Scotlan and Halco.

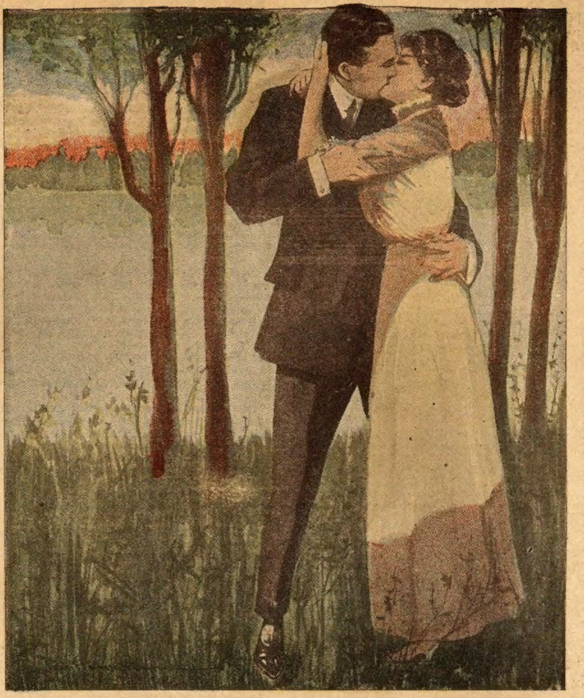
To perish there was neither his wish nor intention. There was too much at stake. He caught the wall for support. He tried to cry out, but the words died voiceless in his throat. He attempted to project himself forward, but the effort was a dismal failure.

"What think you now?" came to him out of the dark, in tones of triumph. "Have you not found a foe worthy of your steel in the Black Doctor?"

Sylvan inwardly confessed that he had. His last desperate effort failed him. His limp body slipped along the wall and he knew no more.

When consciousness came back he was still in the dark. There still lingered about him that strange perfume which had overpowered him on the very threshold of victory. He got upon his feet and found the doorknob, but a wrench told him that he was a prisoner in the room.

It was all over. Doctor Gurth had won, and the beautiful woman for whom he had battled was now his bride. The thought maddened Sylvan. He fought the immovable door with all the fury of vengeance and despair. His fists beat



"Here ends forever the curse of the Diamond Mouse."

the stubborn portal and his voice echoed everywhere.

At last he heard a sound, not at the door, but at the window which looked out upon the porch. He was there in an instant. His clenched hand shattered the lower sash and a gust of night air smote him in the face. Something recoiled from before him, but his fingers gripped it and he glared into the repulsive face of Halco.

"You?" he hissed, as he held the squirming dwarf in his grip. "In Heaven's name where is your demon master?"

The imp of darkness only grinned and showed his teeth.

CHAPTER XIX.

FACE TO FACE.

It was the torture of the long mental strain which had caused Estelle to abandon Ravenswood. The approach of that hour when she was to become the wife of the Black Doctor had proved too much for her. Confronted by the future which offered no escape, owing to Sylvan's absence, she quietly left the manor house, caring little whither she went.

It was the one secret which she would not confide to Selina, although the octoroon knew of the approaching fate. But for the sudden appearance of the White Woman by the river, Estelle might have sought to bury all her sorrows in the mist-covered waters. Vashti had again escaped from Graystone, suspecting the Black Doctor's intentions, and it was her desire to prevent the consummation of his nefarious plot.

Estelle, back once more in her own home, for Ravenswood was now hers, began to pull herself together under the care of the faithful Selina. Of the confrontation in the darkness of the red parlor she knew nothing.

Doctor Gurth and the Reverend Harold Basil found the house deserted when they reached it.

"Is this some of your trickery?" the Man of Graystone demanded of the minister.

"Think you so?" was the answer.

"If I thought so there would be a flock without a shepherd!"

It gave the minister keen pleasure to know that Estelle was not to be found. This only increased the rage of the plotter, who forthwith searched the manor house, going hither and thither like a madman, breaking open locked doors, whilst Harold Basil, with a smile on his face, listened to the racket he made.

"She is gone!" suddenly cried the Black Doctor, as he reappeared to his companion. "The girl has tricked me."

There was no reply. Out into the grounds he went and beat the bush in his insensate fury. All at once he came back and laid his hand on Harold Basil's arm.

"Back to the treadmill you shall go!" he exclaimed. It was a calm face into which he glared.

"If it is within your power to open those accursed doors, I shall return," was the answer.

"My power it is."

A light was burning on the table in the library, and the two men stood face to face in the spreading glow. Harold Basil was not a strong man. His delicate frame was no match for the man whom he confronted. But there was something about him, something akin to a dangerous calmness, which seemed to deter the arch plotter.

"There will be no wedding tonight," suddenly continued the Black Doctor. "You can go back."

The white-faced minister raised his hand.

"So long as I live no words of mine shall unite you to the sweetest woman in all Virginia!" he said, in tones which seemed to ring through the old mansion.

"No? Then you defy me?"

"With a conscience born not of this world."

"Villain!" hissed the Man of Graystone. "What would you have done had we found her here?"

"God helping me, I would have killed you first!"

The Black Doctor recoiled at such words as these.

"You, an ex-prison bird?" he cried. "You, a man who wears the livery of Heaven to serve the devil in?"

The minister's lips curled derisively.

"It is the call of the galley slave!" he said, with exasperating coolness. "It is the voice of the man, who, during his idle hours on the hopeless plantation under a tropic sun, experimented with the deadly poisons of the forests. Do you think that Harold Basil fears you? I shall go back to my little home. When I am wanted I shall be found ministering to my poor flock. But come no more to me for services at the altar if you are to profit thereby."

He crossed the room with the mien of a king among men. A pair of dark eyes followed his every motion. What had turned the minister's blood into iron? What had suddenly strengthened him and filled him with defiance, when at a word from him (the Black Doctor) prison doors would again open to receive their own? It was a mystery which he could not solve.

Doctor Gurth heard the last footsteps of the little minister on the porch. He was about to quit the room when the door opened, and before him towered the giant form of Dragon. The man with his eyes riveted upon the Black Doctor came in like a sneaking panther. There was a singular glitter in the dark eyes into which the plotter looked.

"What brings you hither?" demanded Doctor Gurth.

"The White Woman, master!"

"What of her?"

"She is out of the cage again."

"And you were to see that she did not quit Graystone tonight."

"She is cunning," answered Dragon.

"And you have slept."

Dragon's hand fell like a trip-hammer upon the Black Doctor's shoulder.

"It is a lie!" came in hissing tones over his lips.

"You have betrayed me."

The servant took a long breath.

"Dragon this night is free," said he. "He no longer owes allegiance to the master of Graystone."

"Then——"

There flashed from beneath the Black Doctor's coat something that caught the light like a blade of polished silver. But the same instant the hand of Dragon shot upward, and the lifted hand was arrested in midair.

"The knife is not for Dragon!" he cried. "The death in the hollow needle shall never find his veins, as it found those of Considine, the old overseer."

He held the Black Doctor at bay for a moment. and then sent him reeling across the room. When the Man of Graystone righted himself the room was tenanted by no person but himself. Dragon was gone.

Once more the Black Doctor searched the house for Estelle. He invaded the privacy of her chamber, and went from room to room in his mad hunt.

"I can go back and rest till I am ready to strike again," he said, as he came down the stair. "Saltus Gurth is not powerless. She cannot inherit Ravenswood save as my wife. The will will stand in any court. I will sweep from my path all opposition, and none shall dare raise his hand against me."

He was at the foot of the stair when he heard voices outside. In an instant he was in the red parlor. He heard feet ascend the stair. He knew that Sylvan had come back and that he was carrying a burden to the upper floor. It flashed through his brain that the young man had found Estelle.

Terribly armed for every foe, he waited for his enemy. He heard the knob turn and knew that Sylvan stood with him in the gloom. Then followed the events which we have already described. When the Black Doctor walked from the red parlor Sylvan was in a strange trance on the carpet.

Doctor Gurth tramped down the path and toward the ferry. The scowl on his face rivaled the shadows that hemmed him in. He found old Jasper asleep at his post, and in a few minutes he was across the river and in his gig pushing back toward Graystone.

Baffled for the time, he did not surrender hope. The wind cut his face and heard the mutterings which escaped his lips. What if he had been galley slave? What if he had been held in a foreign leash? This was a free country, and he was a power among the simple-minded people who surrounded him.

When he reached home he darted into the study and turned on a light. A visit to the rooms occupied by the White Woman confirmed Dragon's words. She was not there. Back to the lower floor he came and filled a hollow needle with an almost colorless fluid.

How still the place was. He seemed to hear the beating of his own merciless heart.

"Ha, ha!" he suddenly laughed, "The Diamond Mouse was good enough to terrify Lady Constance, and it would have worked my will with Estelle but for her wild flight."

At that moment the door squeaked and he raised his head.

"You?" he exclaimed, as the instrument of death almost fell from his grasp. "You, Iris? I thought——"

"That I would never cross your path again? This is my hour of vengeance. I have told all. In a short time the closed book of your life will be read by every person roundabout."

He darted toward Iris Scotlan, but paused before her uplifted hand.

"Remember that I am still your wife!" said she.

CHAPTER XX.

THE LIGHT OF LOVE.

It was evident that the man-wolf of Virginia was being run to cover. The sudden appearance at Graystone of the woman who called herself Iris Scotlan, but who was in reality the Black Doctor's wife, had put the cap sheaf upon all his plots. He knew that Sylvan would bait him to his doom, now that he was back at Ravenswood, and, deserted by Dragon and defied by the little minister, there was no hope for final success.

When Sylvan, after finding Halco on the porch of the manor house, recovered from his surprise, he dragged, the dwarf into the red parlor and locked the door. Halco was a man of secrets, but the young man felt that the great one was being kept back. Halco had not divulged all when he was balked in his attempt to escape from Iris Scotlan's house in Richmond, but beyond a certain point he refused to open his mouth.

But now, when he knew that the Black Doctor had been foiled on his wedding night, that Estelle would never fall into his hands, and that he, (Halco) could escape punishment for any misdeeds he might have done, he told Sylvan a story which sent the young Virginian's blood hot through his veins.

"It is enough!" cried Sylvan. "Tomorrow night we shall have this monster in our hands."

"But what of Vashti?" asked Halco.

"The White Woman will now vanish from the stage of action. She has been in Doctor Gurth's power long enough. From what she told Estelle, she has descended from a long line of heroic Englishmen. The Diamond Mouse was once in possession of her house. When it vanished long before it fell into the Young Pretender's hands, her people resolved to make its future ownership one of doom and tragedy. It was to be secretly watched by them through many generations. It was to be followed like the Hindoos followed the Moonstone through all its strange adventures. Whenever the Diamond Mouse disappeared a tragedy followed. How it finally came into Lady Constance's possession remains somewhat of a mystery. She was the last of the Cheverlys and was connected with Prince Charlie's ill-fated line. Where the accursed relic is now I do not know, but Estelle evidently keeps that secret."

Halco listened to Sylvan in silence.

"Can I go now?" he asked.

"Upon one condition."

"Name it, master."

"You shall not reveal anything to the Black Doctor."

The dwarf shrugged his shoulders.

"Just as if I would!" he grinned.

Estelle's lover saw him depart and heard him leaping across the porch to vanish in the darkness which lay beyond.

It was in the heart of the following night when Sylvan left Ravenswood and betook himself toward Graystone. He was not alone, for beside him walked Dragon, silent and glum.

Sylvan intended to beard the lion once more in his den. He knew all now. Dragon had told him much of the Black Doctor's wickedness, and piecing it with the narratives that he had heard from Iris Scotlan and Halco, he was armed as never before.

At length the massive pile called Graystone loomed before them, with the moonbeams lying softly upon it. The sight strengthened the young man's resolutions, and he hastened eagerly forward.

There was no sign of life about the house. Far and wide about it lay that beautiful region which the old pile had cursed. There was no sign of the plotting which its owner had done, no appearance of its evil repute, but Sylvan knew that the day was near at hand when its secrets must be known to the world, and when it would not longer blight the landscape.

He and Dragon approached the house from the front. The giant opened the door which turned silently on its hinges, and they stepped into the hall.

"It is as dark as the tomb the Black Doctor deserves," whispered Sylvan.

There was no reply, but if Sylvan could have seen his companion's face he would have noticed the look of satisfaction which illumined it.

Dragon paused for a moment in the corridor and then opened a door on the right.

"A match," said the giant in low tones.

Sylvan struck a lucifer, and the little flame shot upward, revealing the Black Doctor's study with its strange appointments.

"He is not here," said the young Virginian.

"Look, master!"

The hand of Dragon was outstretched, and Sylvan, gazing over it, recoiled with a startled ejaculation.

They had not found the study untenanted. A table stood in the middle of the room, and at it was a chair in which sat the object of their quest. Sylvan stared at the apparition with distended eyes, and hardly heard the words which leaped from Dragon's lips.

"The serpent has stung himself to death, master!"

Estelle's lover sprang forward and gazed into the white face framed in the mahogany chair. On the lips of the Black Doctor was a derisive smile of triumph.

"See!" cried Dragon, snatching up a little tube which lay on the table as though it had been thrown thither by its owner's hand.

Sylvan gazed at the hollow needle in silence.

"It was with this he could have killed Lady Constance," continued the giant. "It was this instrument which slew Considine in his sleep, and the same that stung you on the streets of Richmond."

Sylvan shuddered. The Black Doctor of Graystone had escaped the law. As Dragon had said, the rattlesnake of two climes had deliberately stung himself to death.

There was nothing left for the pair to do. They turned away and were at the door, when a figure stood before them. Vashti, the White Woman, had come.

"You are too late," said she, as her lips curled with a proud smile. "The coward would not face the law he has outraged times without number."

"But you?" cried Sylvan. "What becomes of Vashti now?"

"What but a life of atonement beyond the sea?" was the reply. "The Diamond Mouse forever passes from my ken. Let us hope that upon Ravenswood shall fall the everlasting sunshine of love and happiness."

She gave a parting gesture with her hands and vanished before Sylvan could detain her.

Two days later the Reverend Harold Basil received from certain authorities a letter which brought from him an exclamation of thankfulness. It informed him that it was known that he was the escaped Convict 999, and that the highest court in the land declared that he had already suffered enough for his one

(Continued on page thirty-one.)

THE GHOST OF DISMAL SWAMP

By BERTHA SEAVEY SAUNIER

IT WAS a hot, black night that fell on the 20th of August in the year 1891, a night dark and sulphurous, the early part of which presaged the outbreak of the "guns of heaven," which a little later flashed fire upon a country whose level monotony was rather unevenly relieved by its scattered groves, its gentle hillsides, its hedges untrimmed, and its neat farmhouses with their clustering shade trees. Here and there a city raised its spires and chimneys toward the fitful flashes above. And, by this same irregular flare of light there was revealed plainly to view a well-built highway, white and glistening, stretched neatly past the farms and leading up to the city of Pemberton. To be sure, the road led on still farther, five miles or more, into Shermanville, and through it, on to Antioch, and on and on, indefinitely, but John Simes, the banker, who died on that stormy 20th of August lived at Pemberton—in fact, was born there—so we need go no further if we are to study the reason of his untimely death and learn the secret that caused it.

As boy and youth he had been well liked by his mates, and when he came to years of manhood and succeeded in his father's business he had the confidence of the community and of the rural districts; a prominent citizen, well favored and esteemed, very much like thousands of worthy citizens in every city and town in these United States. And if he had died in his bed in the ordinary manner of worthy citizens we should not take special notice of him or of the location from which he so unexpectedly passed.

But here is the curious event that startled not only Pemberton but also the entire country, an event and a mystery that for months no one appeared able to fathom. I said if John Simes had died in his bed—yes, if he had, but why waste words, when the fact is that he was found shot through the heart far from his comfortable bed, on the above mentioned well-built highway, on this same black and threatening night of August the 20th, 1891? There he lay across the white and glistening highway that just at this point touched upon the edge of what was called by some "The Big Slough" and by others "The Dismal Swamp," a boggy, low, and in part a submerged stretch of acres, that in very warm weather became a menace to health. A culvert ran under the road at this place, which caused any driver to go carefully in the night, or else Mike Nolan, the cabman, returning with his empty cab, after taking the Hon. Abel Cook to his country home three miles out from Pemberton, had all but driven over the prostrate form which the changeful lightning revealed stretched at full length before his horror-startled eyes.

John Simes' face was turned sideways, as if he had from some primitive instinct put his ear to earth and was there listening when Death overtook him. It was a startling spectacle, and the cab horse had halted in front of it before the driver had made out what was there.

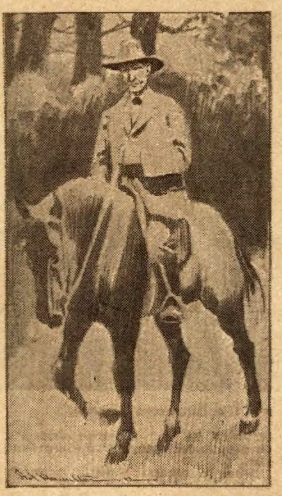
It was a lonely spot, more than a mile from town, with the black wall of space on one side indicating the marsh where the smother of vegetation was all but covered with the tall, toppling, coarse marsh grass that concealed pitfalls of mud and ooze that was never dry, even in the severest drouth. A night so stormy and so dark suggested murder. Either that or a stroke of lightning.

"It's murther, though," Mike said, as he crept fearfully up to the prostrate man, and stood as if rooted there, staring into the sightless face and eyes, but not daring to lay a hand to the body, so that by reason of his fears and the uncertain light he could not then have discovered the real cause of death. "Yis, it's shur-re murther, an' don't I know it be the rayson of me thinkin' thot lightning was niver known to str-rike in wan place fer two toimes. An' if 'e was str-ruck wance hoo wud 'e be str-ruck a second toime, be dad."

Which reasoning in itself was so conclusive that Mike attained a deal of satisfaction from it, and stood for some time cogitating, in a stunned and helpless manner, until the rain began pelting down, making the horse restive and Mike compassionate. For it seemed terrible to him that rain, pelting, beating rain, should be added to the force, whatever it was, that had laid John Simes so low. Yes, it was John Simes without a doubt. Mike moved around to the front of him, and by the light of his carriage lamp, which he had brought, saw the clean-cut, clean-shaven face with its wide-open, blue-gray eyes, its straight, business-pointed nose, its thin-lipped, sensual mouth.

What to do, now that the identity of the man was established, was a puzzle to Mike. At any rate, the horse refused to pass the object in the road, so he was turned about and driven furiously back to the nearest farmhouse, a mile to the south, where lived James Pelton alone with his young daughter Jean.

Mike tore away from his cab as soon as it reached the gate, and ran up the neat brick pathway and hammered with the butt of his whip upon the white door of the house. Pelton himself came frowning and surly to answer him. He was not an emotional man, neither was he given to profanity, but he swore irritably over the racket that was made by Mike upon the door of his house.


His gloomy eyes fixed upon the dim white road.

"It's murther, James Pelton, sir-r, it is," the cabman gasped, obsessed with horror over the deed and the blackness of the night chosen for it. "An' it's John Simes, sir-r, it is, thot's lyin' in the peltin' rain a mile down the road, sir-r—an' he's thot dead, mon, thot me horse won't bide to pass 'im."

"John Simes—John Simes, is it?" replied Pelton, still with his surly gaze. "No, it can't be John Simes, man. I know better. It can never be John Simes, I can tell you that. You must be mad to think of John Simes lyin' dead a mile down the road in the peltin' rain."

Mike stared mutely in his amazement over this, finding no words to answer so bald a contradiction of actual facts, and here a flash of lightning lit up the farmer's face with its blanched look, such as any one would wear in such a light, but the surly, stormy look in the eyes belonged to Pelton alone. As for his mouth, it was hidden in his beard.

"Ye know betther, do ye?" finally replied Mike. "Thin cum an' take a look at the face av 'im wance, an' ye kin give 'im anny name ye want he should have, but I'll name 'im John Simes the minute afther, an' thot's Mike Nolan fer ye. An' noo whot'll we be doin' wit the—the gentlemon, wholver 'e might be called, bedad? Ar-re we to lave 'im there the night, thin, with the stor-rm a-batin' 'im into 'is grave, with niver a pick ner a shovel to give 'im a bloomin' lift at gittin' out o' sight o' 'im thot took 'is loife? Wot, mon?"

Pelton shrugged his shoulders. "It ain't John Simes, I tell ye, whatever ye do with it. I don't know what to do—go call the police—that's it, call the police from Pemberton. It ain't John Simes—ye're drunk tonight, Nolan, that's what ails ye, or ye'd know better. You go an' get the police, an' they'll take care o' the fellow, whoever 'tis, but it ain't John Simes."

A roar of thunder drowned Mike's profane reply. Was there ever such a contrary fool as Pelton? And didn't he (Mike) just get through telling him that the blooming horse refused to pass the spot where the gentleman was a-resting? So how could he notify the Pemberton police?

"Then," said Pelton, turning to go back into the house, "don't go past him then, whoever 'tis. You can telephone the police from Cook's place—but tain't John Simes—you're drunk, Nolan, and you can't see hell on a night like this. Go and telephone the police," Pelton admonished, with a final move to shut the door, leaving the amazed cabman at his wit's end, staring at the closed door, and going over Pelton's refrain like a sort of human machine:

"'Tain't John Simes, 'e's sayin'—drat his dumb skull. An' is it dr-runk ye ar-re, the night, Mike Nolan, eh? Ye kin see hell in a mon's face on a night like this, Mike, if 'e has it there, dr-runk or no dr-runk," he added, angrily, as he stumbled down the steps and found his way back to the waiting cab.

So obsessed was he with anger and dread—anger at Pelton's reckless denial of a fact and dread of the lifeless form of the man in the road, that he whirled the cab about and galloped off in the direction of the Cook place with the haste of a Jehu. It was two miles farther to the south, and he arrived just as the family was about to retire. But no one thought of retiring after hearing what Mike had to tell. And the police of Pemberton were notified by means of the telephone. They were on the spot when Mike returned, bearing once more the Honorable Cook, together with his son Harold and the man Henry who helped about the Cook property, to the place of the tragedy.

In the amazed and gaping excitement of the hour no one took special notice of the fact that James Pelton was also one of the party—no one except Mike, whose injured feelings singled him out readily enough among the other dark forms that stood about the dead man, whose form was set forth by the flashes of light, which by this time were becoming less and less retributive. Bitten as he was by malicious curiosity over Pelton's behavior, Mike found a chance to glower into his face with a very bad attempt at humor.

"It's not John Simes, eh? Thin who the divil is it, if it ain't John Simes, eh? An' is it dr-runk is Mike Nolan, the night, ye son of a bloomin' donkey?" To which Mike added an inquisitive leer that Pelton turned his back upon without the ceremony of a reply.

The dead man's hat was missing, and Pelton helped to find it, finally locating it in the gully at the side of the road, and himself placing it in the hands of an officer, after John Simes had been transferred to the ambulance.

They carried him home. And news of his mysterious death was spread by the usual wildfire custom, while detectives were detailed to unravel the mystery. He had been shot from behind—some miscreant had pierced his body with a bullet that went straight through his heart without giving the victim the chance to defend himself. This was added outrage to the deed of killing.

Neither the aged mother of the man nor the housekeeper at his home knew on what errand John had been that would have taken him out on such a night a mile or more from town without a carriage of any sort and unattended. A man of regular habits, shrewd in business, like his father, tall and straight and well-favored, with a pair of heavy dark brows quite prominent over his blue-gray eyes. John Simes was 30 years old, and his sudden taking off was more than a nine days' wonder. His mother followed him in less than a year, stricken down with shock from which her age-enfeebled body could not recover. And John had no known enemies. The detectives could discover none who would be likely to bring about such a tragedy.

During all the conjecture that was scarcely lessened in the weeks and months that followed, Mike Nolan regarded Pelton with the inquisitive leer that he had bred the night of the finding, and made it a base of his crudely humorous attempts at sarcasm.

"It ain't John Simes, oh, no, it aint! Do ye see hell on a night loike thot, thin, ye son of a bloomin' donkey, eh?" he was wont to remark when he and Pelton chanced to meet, which was not often.

And Pelton returned Mike's sally with a surly silence, upon which Mike added a heaping measure by concluding: "Noo doubt ye're dr-runk, mon, dr-runk as a lord ye ar're, or ye'd a knowed it was John Simes widout the thr-rouble o' goin' to look at 'im."

This gave rich satisfaction to Mike, and brought him no punishment in return. Pelton was a self-contained, peaceable man, and attended strictly to his own affairs, was independent, with a set look in his eyes, bespeaking a law unto himself that asked nor heeded any philosophy but his own as mentor in either morals or manners.

Pelton's young daughter Jean left home in the fall, and paid a protracted visit to her aunt, who had a place in the city of Chicago, which was forty miles to the south of Pemberton, and Pelton stayed alone and "did for himself" through the fall and winter. Jean had felt the loneliness of her life, he said, and wanted to see something of a big city, and her aunt, his own sister Maggie, had taken her in charge. So Pelton lived on at the farm and grew more and more reticent, more and more self-contained, until people said that he was a very eccentric fellow. Of course they learned to leave him to himself, which was evidently just what he wanted.

Mike Nolan drove his cab past the culvert where the tragedy took place on the keen run, whenever he had occasion to travel in this direction, for his memory stirred uneasily over the scenes of that black night of August the 20th. He believed the place one of ill omen, and that it would bring no good to any one who was so unfortunate as to be caught in its vicinity after nightfall.

As luck would have it, Mike was the one commissioned to go to Pelton's one evening in April with a telegram. Mike was assigned to telegrams, it would seem, by way of diversion, yet his natural curiosity was not so great as to lessen his dread of the spot where he had encountered the body of John Simes some eight months before.

At this time the swamp was awakening to the call of summer, was fresh in its first green garb of the year. It's few bare trees, bending over the edge, were mirrored below in the water left among the bogs and mire by the spring freshets. It was not a pleasant scene at best, and Mike's crude mind easily associated it with departed spirits. So he shunned it, and this night, when he passed, laid the lash on his horse and raced over the culvert after his usual style, muttering under his thick red mustache the usual refrain borrowed of Pelton the night of the killing:

"'Tain't John Simes—eh? Thin who the divil was it thot wuz shot in 'is back, eh? Who wus thot, thin, lyin' in the r-road of me nag, of a black an' bit-ter night loike that'n—eh? Oh, no, it ain't John Simes at all, at all."

But Mike, however resentful over past treatment, was so bitten with curiosity over the telegram in his pocket, that he summoned a veneer of grace and good humor when he drove into the yard and met Pelton just returning from his day of plowing in the cornfield.

"It's a telegram fer ye, James Pelton," Mike announced, sitting high on his cab seat and fumbling in his pocket for the yellow envelope.

Pelton hung the reins on the neck-yoke of the harness and left his team, while his weathered face became fixed and stern, ready to receive whatever tidings there might be for him to meet.

"A telegram—so!" he said, reaching to receive it. "It ain't from Jean—no, it can't be Jean that's sent me a telegram," he asserted, as he ripped the cover from the message. Unfolding the paper he read:

"Jean is dead. Come at once. MAGGIE."

He read this brief line with a gasp which he quickly checked with closed lips, and then, seeing Mike curiously waiting, he spread the shallow slip of yellow wide before him.

"Read it if ye want," he commanded, huskily, and when Mike had done this he crushed the paper and turned back to his horses.

This was dismissal, but Mike stayed long enough to offer a word of condolence to the stricken father:

"The saints be with ye, James Pelton, the day. Bad 'cess to the luck that took away the choild—an' Jean that swate an' fair as a Easter lily—an' may the Mother of Gawd r-rest the swate sowl!" he finished, and getting no response Mike turned his horse and departed.

And so Jean Pelton was dead. Mike continued to ruminate on her youth and her beauty as he traveled slowly back to town. A prettier girl, he said, never stepped on green grass, and her just turned a woman—was seventeen, or so—and that gay and happy he had to walk his horse past the house to hear her sing of a bright summer morning. And here, now, was Pelton, the surly dog, left without wife or child——

"Bad 'cess to the luck of the mon, and farewell to the swate Jeanie," was Mike's conclusion, as he reached for the whip, for by now he was nearing the swamp and the fatal spot that he feared. "It's a lang farewell to ye, Jeanie—you'd have come to a betther fate, Acushla, if you'd but stopped at home, maybe, an' picked you a good husband." Here he tightened his grip on the whip as he came near to the culvert, and added: "There was John Simes, noo—I saw ye with him wan toime on this very road—I swear it was you, Jeanie, though it was dark, an' I've no doubt ye could have had 'im, though 'e was beyent ye in a way, bein' a banker, an' thot, but str-ranger things have happened, me gir-rl."

Here Mike put whip to horse and galloped over the resounding culvert at a furious pace, for daylight had faded and the air of the place had a subtle and "spookish" feeling, according to Mike's opinion.

It must have been Mike Nolan who gave rise to the rumor that "Dismal Swamp" was haunted. No one quite knows how the report got abroad or who first let it loose, and no one cared, presumably, so long as the word was actually at large and was preying upon the fears of the people and of the community in general. At any rate, before the summer was over this report had been confirmed by more than one party who professed to have seen strange lights moving over the surface of the swamp—lights that resembled faces shining forth out of the darkness, appearing and disappearing in the most unaccountable manner.

James Pelton may or may not have heard something of these absurd rumors. He would have called them absurd had he known of them, having no patience with such "tomfoolery." But Pelton was even more reticent and silent since Jean's death than before. He told inquiring neighbors that Jean had died of a fever. No, she wasn't sick very long —less than a fortnight, he told them. And she was buried in a cemetery near the city because it seemed best, being most convenient. Her mother's grave was in the East, and when he died he wanted to rest beside her. No, Jean was all right where she was for all time, he thought, but of this he said little, and became silent and surly, with a new look of self-justification in his face that grew to resemble a form of peace. But there were few who read the man aright or who undertook to reach through the mask of taciturnity with which he surrounded himself. He was left to his lonely life as a wrecked ship is abandoned to its fate, lying on the same reefs that had put it out of commission.

The summer was far advanced by this time. Pelton used his spare time during the month of August in draining the portion of swamp land that encroached upon his farm, laying tile, and turning the surplus water back into the main body of the slough. It was hot, close weather, with an occasional thunderstorm clearing the air. And in the swamp was a smother of vegetation dying under and among the loops of tall, coarse grass that the wind and rain had bent to earth, with stagnant water hidden beneath much of it, and miry places snug and treacherous hiding between the bogs and hummocks. No one ventured to walk there, though in time of freshet a few huntsmen launched a boat and went after snipe and wild ducks that rested for a few days in their journey farther north. But in August the water was low enough to be out of view among the tall grass.

Mike had few calls to drive into the country, but one of these errands was to take the Hon. Abel Cook from the evening train to his summer home, to which his family escaped from the heat and dust of the city each year, and Mike was sometimes asked to carry the gentleman in his cab. It was on the evening of a close and lowering day nearly a year from the date of the tragic taking off of John Simes that Mike again undertook to make the transfer, and was approaching the culvert at his usual high rate of speed when the horse came to a sudden halt in the midst of the highway with a broken crupper-strap.

Cold sweat started upon Mike's brow as he crept reluctantly down to mend the broken harness, casting furtive and fearful glances the while toward the black space at his back that indicated the haunted region, and muttering imprecations on his bad luck and on crupper-straps in general, this one in particular.

Detaching one of the carriage lamps, while explaining the cause of the delay to his passenger, he proceeded to see what could be done to patch up the break; and, finding a piece of string in his pocket he was succeeding fairly well in mending the break, considering his nervous haste and the uncertain light that he worked by, and was about to proceed on his journey with growing courage, since no dread horror had overtaken him in his forced delay so that he could give a daring look toward the swamp by means of a good riddance.

The horse had already started, when Mike's glance caught sight of a floating, ghostly disk of light glowing and moving in the black wall of space close to where the drooping trees stood with their feet wet and rooted in the slime at the side where the vegetation was rank and now was dying in the excess of heat and moisture.

Mike did not stay to discover any reason for the strange phenomenon. The light was moving; it resembled the face of a woman, and it was at the usual height of a woman, consequently it must be the ghost of a woman or of a man—probably John Simes! With a yell of fear Mike raced southward along the dim, white highway, while his passenger, the Honorable Abel Cook must have thought he had suddenly gone mad and was not a safe person to drive a cab.

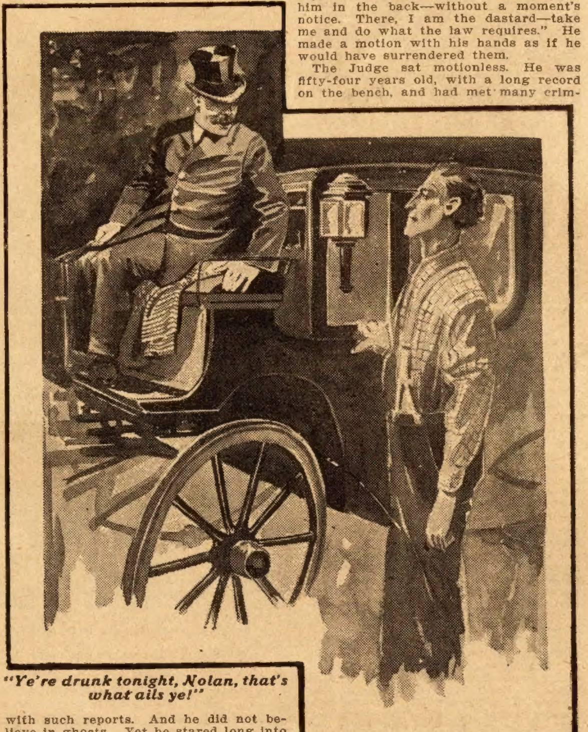
They passed the Pelton farm as Pelton himself, on horseback and bound on some errand to Pemberton, rode out of his open gate. He stared wonderingly at the flying cab, its bobbing lights, its very much perturbed passenger, being jolted and tossed, and the strenuous figure on the high front seat operating the whip.

"It's that Mike Nolan again, with no mercy on the poor horse," Pelton commented, inaudibly, turning toward the town, "and no doubt the man's drunk—again."

Pelton brooded. Yes, "again." He would not retract what he had said on a former occasion, much as a year ago. Yes, it was a year, he remembered, lacking a few days, since John Simes was foully murdered in his tracks by some dastardly coward who shot him in the back on the public highway. That is the way people told of the tragedy. A dastard—and a coward! Pelton brooded on, his gloomy eyes fixed upon the dim, white road before him, while the accustomed settled look of peace again crept into his face—a look of age like that upon the ancient hills. Since Jean had passed away the look was there so often that it was becoming habitual. And when it was not present one saw something restless, bitter, irresistible there, due to his bereavement and cultured by his pesistent isolation.

John Simes—dead and murdered! Would they never know—never discover the man who slew him—slew John Simes? John—and yes, his mother as well. For the shock of the son's death had killed the mother. Pelton brooded remorsefully over the sacrifice of innocent blood, as any man of feeling might, and presently reached the culvert, his horse pacing at a comfortable gait, his hand grasping the bridle lightly, his chin buried in his beard, and his moody eyes hidden under the suntanned hat-brim a dark figure in the midst of the evening light.

Pelton's restless glance here came in contact with the strange light that had terrified Mike—a glowing disk moving tardily forward about a man's height from the ground. It was like some unknown form of spirit on some mission bent, journeying from the world of shining spirits, with a message or a warning or a destiny as mysterious as was itself. Slowly but steadily it came forward, and Pelton's glance became a fixed stare. He had read in the town locals only a few evenings before that "Dismal Swamp" was thought to be haunted. Mere rumor of course, started by some superstitious fool. Pelton was a man of sense. He had no patience with such reports. And he did not believe in ghosts. Yet he stared long into the face of the advancing disk of light, and drew his horse in as if he would investigate the mystery.



"Ye're drunk tonight, Nolan, that's what ails ye!"

Pelton felt the sense of amazement mounting within him—it was probably amazement and not fear or horror—yet slowly, almost imperceptibly, his hair lifted, though for all that he stayed a moment consumed with curiosity and wonder. But staring at the moving light gave him no explanation of it, so he moved forward, regretting to leave so curious a phenomenon, only to find that the disk of light followed close in his wake. It was behind his shoulder, by now, and a sudden chill crept down Pelton's spine and up again to the roots of his hair.

The horse quickened his pace to a fast walk, but displayed no great anxiety to get himself away from the vicinity of the strange light. Only Pelton's dread of it grew and became a fear as he proceeded toward Pemberton, and what his secret thoughts were no one might guess, when he noted that the light kept close to his shoulder, as on and on he rode through the still, summer air. Not a breath was moving. And, as darkness fell, the glow of light became brighter, though it did not seem to radiate light enough to brighten the dim highway. What could it mean? The man on the horse bowed his head, his fear growing to terror. Presently he groaned as if heavy guilt were bearing him to earth Only the broad back of the horse kept him from falling. His mind was lost in a sea of grief; no, not grief, but of something he scarce knew what, something like remorse. The lines on his face deepened, and the familiar look of self-justification left him. He was no more the same James Pelton that he had been but fifteen minutes before.

A mile farther on he rode into the semi-light of the first electric arc of the town and reaching this he glanced back. The mysterious glow of fire or of spirit was gone! But Pelton breathed no easier for that. He felt as if a hand were pressing close over his heart, until his breath came in fitful tides that all but strangled him. He forgot his errand to Pemberton, and remembered only that a certain man, a chance acquaintance, Judge Bailey, lived on Third street, which was handy to the main road, and to this man's house he directed his horse. Dazed, as if he were hypnotized, Pelton dismounted at the gate, tied his horse, and entered.

The Judge himself, a large florid, genial man, admitted him, and seeing the man's preoccupation put him into the library easy-chair and closed the door against undue interruption.

"Well, Pelton, this is an unlooked-for pleasure. What can I do for you?" the Judge said.

Pelton shook his head. His speech seemed to have left him. But presently he summoned enough will power to say:

"You know John Simes—he was killed?" The Judge nodded, fixing Pelton's face with his judicial gaze.

"Well, I am the man you are after. I killed him!" Pelton rejoined and then repeated. "I killed him, Judge—shot him in the back—without a moment's notice. There, I am the dastard—take me and do what the law requires." He made a motion with his hands as if he would have surrendered them.

The Judge sat motionless. He was fifty-four years old, with a long record on the bench, and had met many criminals, and he was not a man to be borne down with any confession of guilt, but in this case he was surprised into silence. He suspected insanity and eyed Pelton sharply for signs of this, but could not confirm the suspicion. Then he pondered a moment, while wonder and curiosity forced words from him.

"Why are you telling me this, Pelton? Did you really shoot him down? Why did you do it, Pelton—come, let's hear the whole story, if it is true, now you have begun it—but I don't believe you know what you are saying, man, do you?"

Pelton waved a hand. "I know, Judge, what I am saying. Don't go to think I'm clean mad—I've kept this thing in my heart for a year, and never in my life would have let it out, but something happened tonight that drew it out of me against my own will. I don't know for the life of me what it was—something that followed after me—looked like a thin sort of a moon—came out of the swamp. I've read about the swamp being haunted—maybe 'tis—only I don't believe in ghosts. This thing sailed in on my back and followed me for a mile. When I got to town it wasn't anywhere, but I was all in by that time, Judge—maybe you can guess how I felt. I ain't mad now, but I would ha' been if I'd a kept still any longer about John Simes."

"Well, well!" The Judge got no further in his perplexity. He sat, apparently lost in thought, waiting for Pelton to go on and tell more if he would. "I expect," he added thoughtfully, "that cesspool of a swamp ought to be drained. That would be a solution of the ghost business, all right, for no doubt what you saw was a result of vegetable decomposition. However, we will leave that for further investigation. Of course there is nothing supernatural about it."

Here the Judge waited again. And presently Pelton said:

"I won't say that I'm sorry, Judge, for what I've done."

Here he stopped again, wrestling with his desire to keep back the main part of his secret. But, having confessed in part, he was impelled to go on, though by this time he felt suffocated, as if his heart would presently stop beating. He had been troubled for several months past with shortness of breath, which trouble was now emphasized by his excitement. And it seemed impossible for him to get enough air into his lungs to talk with. He tried with quick gasps to get it, and failing to do so, clasped the low arm of the rocker with his hands. Then, still failing to get air, he slipped quietly to the floor. The Judge sprang to his aid.

"What is it, Pelton? What can I do, man?" he cried.

But Pelton's face was now deadly pale. He had carried his secret locked in his heart so long that its release was too much for his physical strength. It sank rapidly under the strain, carrying his senses into oblivion. But his lips formed a whispered request before his weakened heart ceased beating:

"The farm—it goes to Jean's child—with Maggie—guardian!"

That was all. And the Judge took down the last words of John Pelton and had them duly recorded in legal form, and saw that his request was carried out to the letter.

* * *

Weighty Decision.

"I have seen some queer decisions in my time," said the old baseball fan, "but I think the most peculiar happened to myself when I was a young fellow on an amateur nine.

"We were playing on a home-made diamond in a lot with plenty of rocks around the edges. By the time the last inning was reached excitement ran high, for the score was a tie, and the old ball was in a rather dilapidated condition. The first fellow on our side singled, stole second, and finally reached third on a sacrifice. The following player fanned out, and then I went to the bat. All eyes were on me, and I felt it was the great chance of my life.

"The ball, as I have said, was in bad shape and constantly getting worse. There was no chance of hitting it very far, but when I slugged out what should have been a two-bagger, we were all dumfounded to see the ball go up in the air and break into two pieces. The shortstop and second baseman each ran for a section of the ball. The shortstop fumbled, but the second baseman held on to his piece.

"In the excitement I reached first and the fellow on third came home with the winning run. The whole crowd gathered around the umpire and pandemonium broke loose.

"How was it decided? You'd never guess in a hundred years. The umpire was an old-timer and as cool as a cucumber. He picked up the two sections of the ball and went across the street to the corner grocery store, followed by the crowd. He placed the pieces on the scales and, because the section that had been caught weighed 5-16 of an ounce more than the one that the shortstop fumbled, that umpire called me out, and we lost the game."

* * *

A Nutty Name.

Joseph Evergreen Ryan of Chicago has a friend in the priesthood who has a keen sense of humor. The priest told Ryan about a christening at which he officiated a short time ago.

The christening party consisted of the proud father, the baby—a girl—the grandfather, and all the rest of the folks. The grandfather stood nearest to the priest during the ceremony.

"What's the child's name?" asked the priest of the grandfather at the appropriate moment.

"I dunno," the grandfather replied. And he turned to the father and whispered hoarsely: "What's its name?"

"Hazel," replied the father.

"What?" asked the grandfather.

"Hazel," repeated the father.

The grandfather threw up his hands in disgust.

"What d'ye think av that?" he asked the priest. "With the calendar av the saints full av gur-rl names—an' him namin' his after a nut!"

* * *

Serious Omission.

The new millionaire's banquet table was spread, and the guests about to be summoned.

"Are you sure there are no reporters present?" anxiously asked the host of the bulter.

"I've made certain of it, sir."

"Then go out and get a few," rejoined the host.

The Volcano Prisoners

Or, THE SEA COAST QUEEN :=: By WILLIAM H. MANNING

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CHAPTER XII.

A STARTLING MYSTERY.

DURING the rest of the day we kept a lookout at a favorable spot with a glass, but no natives were seen above the level land. The encouragement resulting from this fact was not great, for searchers might be in the avenues of the volcano and remain unseen by us.

Toward twilight Captain Knapp asked me to go with him for a final look and we saw as little as before.

"Do you mind the east sky, sir?" I asked, as we prepared to descend. "It reminds me of what came before the late gale."

"This is an angry sky, Tom. Every hue that borders on black, green and ugly red. It's not a natural companion of the western sunset, but if it means a gale it may not come for some days."

He took it more lightly than I was able to do, for it surely was a threatening sky, but it was time for us to go and we went. Descending, we both noticed an odor like brimstone, at times and we wondered if the volcano was as dead as reputed, but that, too, was passed by in the presence of more urgent matters.

All preparations had been made for going to our former vessel and building the raft, and at the appointed time we started on our dangerous journey. Our seven men looked hardy and reliable, but I could hardly take my eyes from the girls. Their safety was dependent upon our sagacity and valor. Mildred noticed my regard and came closer to me.

"Mr. Allen," she said, softly, "do you doubt the wisdom of this step?"

"There has been no voice raised against it," I replied.

"Still, you doubt."

"Hardly that. If all depended upon me I would not change the plan of events one jot or tittle. If I have a vague notion that we would do well to wait until the passion and the search of the islanders blow over, I am so uncertain of the wisdom of my plan that I dare not suggest it even faintly. No human being knows whether we are doing well or ill."

"May I walk close to you?" she suddenly asked.

"Gladly," I responded, confused of a sudden without knowing why, and speaking a trifle at random. "Pray let me give you my arm, and I may be able to help you when the ground roughens."

Her hand slid gently into the arm I offered.

"You know it was you who rescued me at the first."

I said something in reply. I know not what, for the hand that rested so lightly was, nevertheless, as forceful in a way as if three times as large. I had a period when I forgot the object of our journey, but presently I noted that Captain Knapp was giving like assistance to Olive, and that it was Steve Radd who went at our front, the pilot of our hazardous journey.

Dangerous as it was we met with no trouble on the way, and finally, after dodging here and there through the stretch of trees, we drew close to the cliff that hung in air hard aboard the stranded ship. Our captain had taken the notion that I was a very reliable man (though I think others were my equals), and he asked me to go first and look at the Happy Ann. I went, and, reaching the summit of the cliff, had the desired scene under view.

Looking, I saw the lesser island with its ill-used burden. The ship seemed as when I last saw her. The hull lay inky black in the night, but the masts rose so high that they had the sea, rolling under whitecaps, as a background, and so they were like shapely wands against the outlying field. Lack of moon and an overcast sky left the deck a mere dark smear, but I lay flat and watched and listened in vain for human life there. At the end of ten minutes I returned and reported, but Knapp had grown wary, and he asked me to descend and board the Ann before we took the girls there.

Steve relieved me at the cliff's edge, after which I clambered down, swam the strait, and so neared the wreck. I had become confident, but I used prudence, advanced slowly, and finally hauled myself aboard with caution. I then made the circuit, and, finding nobody, visited both the forecastle and the cabin. When satisfied I signaled to Steve.

Five minutes later all of our number were in the ship. The captain took charge with decision and swiftness. First of all he had arms brought on deck and properly distributed, making arrangements exactly as if the Ann was afloat, and when it was done we were ready to withstand a full boarding-party.

Next came the raft. The foundation was, of course, to be empty water-breakers, and these were duly placed, after which we brought together the spars and other essentials of our project. We were hampered by the fact that all must be done in plain sight of chance passers-by, and that a light was a dangerous feature. To offset the latter the skipper sent Jim Brown back to the cliff-top to watch, and then a lantern was used warily, its light partly muffled, yet so open that it fell upon the lashings in use.

For the work now in hand Seth Styles and Ben Gustin had wisely been chosen as superior to anybody else at fashioning knots and laying spars. Both were experts, and Seth, in particular, could twist a rope into shapes fit for any man to trust his life to, and that was what we should do if the raft ever was launched.

I had been chosen to walk the deck forward and aft, first along the larboard bulwark and then along its mate, there to keep watch, and my duty enabled me to cast an occasional glance skyward. Somehow, that angry eastern horizon had impressed me not a little, and there was still something to be seen. Although the sun had long before dropped in the west, the companion sky was marked by long, irregular stripes that lay one upon the other, a "horse-tail" sky of unnatural, sullen colors in many shades of dark that were variations of black.

Remembering what had preceded the gale that drove the Happy Ann aground, I liked that sky very little. If we got away on the raft and an equal gale struck us, even Seth's cunning knots would not hold the raft together. My spirits were at low tide. The tension was telling on me; I grew nervous, and the guarded hammer-strokes of the men sounded unnaturally loud.

I had been giving but little direct attention to my companions, but, presently, as I reached the starboard bow and turned about, I found Olive in my path. She spoke somewhat quickly.

"Mr. Allen, has Mildred been with you?"

I came out of my gloomy dreams and gave heed to her.

"No. I have been in constant motion, and have walked alone. Why do you ask?"

"I can't find her."

"What?" I cried, startled.

"She was with me only a little while back, and then she suddenly disappeared. I have been below, but I can't find her."

"Are you sure she is not in the cabin or a stateroom?"

"I have looked there, and I've been calling to her everywhere."

It was not a time to let anything unusual pass, even though it might be a trifle, and I hurried to Captain Knapp.

"May Luke Hand relieve me a while, sir?" I asked. "Miss Olive has missed her sister."

"Certainly," the skipper replied, with the easy manner of one who feels no apprehension. "Luke, go to patrolling. Probably Miss Parish is below."

I hurried down the companionway and swept a glance around the lighted cabin, after which I looked into each of the rooms, calling the name of the missing girl as I did so.

"You see, she is not here!" exclaimed Olive, agitated.

"The steward's pantry!" I reminded, and went that way.

Again it was a fruitless quest, and I soon satisfied myself that Mildred was not in the after part of the ship, below. Then I hurried up again and visited the forecastle. It was a place of open chests, grim bunks, scattered garments, and other natural accompaniments, but no human being was there. When I had peered into the galley there were but two places unseen, the run and the hold, and it seemed absurd to suppose the girl was there.

"Mildred is gone!" gasped Olive, "but where—where? Yes, and how?"

Before I could answer there was a guarded hail from our watcher on the cliff.

"Ahoy, the deck! Lie low! There's a native canoe in the waters!"

"Merciful heavens!" cried Olive, "the cannibals have seized Mildred!"

CHAPTER XIII.

MY STRANGE CAPTIVE.

Misfortunes were coming in a bunch, but the announcement that a native canoe was close aboard fell dully on my ears, except as it might concern the missing girl. That Mildred could have been kidnaped from the ship and carried away by the islanders looked too absurd to be considered. If my mind was centered upon her it was otherwise with our captain, who turned all his attention to the matter of the canoe.

"Drop all work!" he ordered, quickly but softly. "Get your weapons, station yourselves at the bulwarks, and then every man be still as a clod."

I mechanically moved with my mates, and all hands crouched in the shadows of the deck, pistols and other weapons in hand. Thus far we had heard nothing except Jim Brown's warning; but Captain Knapp was cautiously peering over the taffrail.

"I see the canoe now," he said, barely above a whisper. "Look, Tom! Don't you sight her?"

"Ay, sir," I replied. "There's a dark blotch, and smaller blotches rise above her gunwale."

"It's only a small crew. Unless a consort craft follows her we need not fear an attack, but I suspect we are to be boarded for plunder. Stand by, my hearties, and don't move until I give the word. If those fellows cross our bulwarks we must pounce upon them quick, quiet, and lively, and capture the whole lot. They must give no alarm by crying out, and none by carrying tales to the other natives. Now, be quiet!"

For one I stood absolutely motionless, but my eyes were busy. The canoe was in plain sight, and I made out four men at the paddles that moved almost as lightly and easily as feathers. Coming from the south they were advancing upon the lesser island, and it came to me that it was ridiculous to suppose these men had seized Mildred. That they intended to board the Happy Ann was far more likely, and I prepared to do my part to baffle them.

"Tough luck!" muttered Seth Styles, at my elbow. "Drat the heathen! Why couldn't they stay where they belong?"

Nearer came the craft, the graceful, deliberate swing of the blades a marked contrast to the irritation and fear among our party, but we hoped to get square in the fight we scented. Nearer yet, and then we had them off the stern of the Ann.

"Goin' to land on our larboard beam," added Seth.

It seemed so, but when they were at the upper end of the island they did not bear in a point. Instead, they plied their paddles as before, and, without looking at the stranded ship, began to draw away.

"By the beard o' Neptune! They are goin' straight on!" muttered Seth.

Still the canoe held its even way, passing both the little island and the outlying strait, and a gradual turn took them out of sight around the point of the larger island. Plainly, they had other business in hand than to board the Ann.

It was a great relief, and we straightened up and breathed freer, but with the going of the danger my mind reverted to Mildred, and I grew more anxious than when we had the man-eaters hard aboard. I knew Captain Knapp had not realized the serious nature of the case, and I turned to him and poured out the story of the disappearance and our unavailing search for the girl.

"Why, where can she have gone?" demanded Knapp, promptly alert. "No man can have come secretly aboard and seized her, for the best luck would not enable him to take her away without an alarm. She is still in the ship."

It was a verdict my own judgment confirmed, and I quickly replied: "She must be either in the hold or the run."

"Both places are easily searched," the captain continued. "The hold is beam-full with cargo, and the open part easily searched. Try the run, Tom, and if there are no developments I'll bear a hand, myself."

I returned to the cabin, accompanied by Olive, and lifted the trap. The run was a dark vault below, and when I had called in vain I prepared to descend. Had I been wise I should have hunted up a lantern and swung it from above, but worry dulled my wits and, thinking she might have lifted the trap, herself, to explore, and then fallen, I ignored the blackness and swung myself down.

"Miss Mildred!" I called, and Olive repeated the hail from above.

There was no answer, and the silence was unbroken.

"She is not there," added the sister. "Oh! where, where is she?"

I was feeling my way, but as I passed beyond the area lighted by the cabin lamp I realized the need of a lantern, and was about to call to Olive when something happened. A grasp was suddenly upon me that bound my arms to my body, and then I was neatly plucked off my feet and flung prostrate. Instinctively flinging out my lower right arm, which was free from the constriction, I closed my fingers upon a naked arm that was not mine, and the truth flashed upon me. A native had me in his grasp.

I writhed desperately and partly broke the hold, getting a return grasp, but when I would have taken advantage of my strength my opponent squirmed away neatly. Struggling, we knocked over some object that banged metallicly, and Olive screamed above. She knew a fight was on, and it was her feminine way of greeting it. Then she surprised me. The trapdoor came down with a clatter, and it was clear she had shut me in with the barbarian.

It was my misfortune that I was wedged in among various articles in stowage, and I found my efforts crippled in consequence, but I finally dislodged them in part by my contortions, after which I had no trouble in turning my adversary. I swung myself up and pinioned the writhing arms so that my foe was helpless.

"Lie still!" I ordered. "Bother me further and I'll show you no mercy. Be quiet!"

The command was easily given, but not so easily enforced. The writhing continued briefly, and the singular semi-hissing that accompanied it told of a violent temper, but finally the tense arms relaxed and the struggle was over. A good deal of power had been opposed to me, though not enough to test American muscle much seriously.

Listening, I found absolute quiet above, but, though Olive had lost her head and shut me in below, I did not expect to remain long in my predicament. I waited with what patience I could muster, and at last the trap was raised again. Light flowed down, though it did not strike where we were.

"Ahoy, Tom!" cried somebody whom I recognized as Steve Radd. "Are you on a level keel, or well-full and dippin' under a lee list?"

"All fine as a fiddle here," I answered, "but I've got a native captive. Bear a hand and give me a light."

A lantern was swung down and I saw Olive's face at the trap, but she drew back and Steve took the light and leaped down into the run. He swung it in a circle and then the blaze fell full upon myself and my prisoner. I looked and fairly gasped with surprise. My late adversary was Titicalo, the island queen!

The discovery made me speechless, but she was regarding me with her usual cold calm. Her eyes and face were about as full of emotion as a marble statue.

"Let me up!" she directed, with icy composure.

Mechanically I gained my own feet and would have helped her, but she came up with a lithe quickness that was not so much haste as natural readiness. Then, remembering how dangerous she was, I dropped my hand upon her shoulder.

"Where is the girl you lured down here?" I asked sternly, making a guess at previous events.

"A few feet away. Look and you will find her, but if you don't free me from your grasp I will kill you!" she exclaimed, bitter anger under her cold exterior.

Somehow I did not care to defy her, and I obeyed. Then came a cry from Olive at the trap.

"Mildred, Mildred!" she called, jubilantly. "Oh, go to her. Make sure she is not harmed!"

Steve met my eye and nodded, as though to promise that Titicalo should do no damage, and I turned away. Mildred was there. I saw that she was bound and gagged, and I sprang forward and liberated her. With my aid she came to her feet without difficulty, and I felt that she had suffered no actual harm. I freed her from all restraint, and she murmured a blessing upon me, but the queen sneered contemptuously.

"What a beautiful nursery picture! The babes in the woods over again! I read that rubbish when I was of the world, worldly, but never thought to find the precious infants!"

"Are you injured, Miss Mildred?" I asked, anxiously ignoring the bitter queen.

"Only frightened. I came to the cabin, a while ago, to see if I could find a wrap for later use, but this woman pounced upon me and flung me down here. She bound me and gagged me, and—but that's all. She did me no great harm."

I drew a sigh of relief and turned to Titicalo.

"How do you happen to be here?" I asked, curtly.

"The same to you, my sailor lad. This island being mine I need not explain my movements. Yet, I don't mind saying I wanted to discover just what was here. When you boarded the ship I went into hiding, and I captured this baby girl because she was once before my prisoner, and I planned to take her back to my village. That is my perfidy in full. Luck had winged the wrong way for me and I am your captive. Let me wish you joy of your seizure! Now, what will you do with me?"

It was a question that staggered me. I did not doubt that the shrewd, crafty woman knew the full force of our party, and that we were trying to construct a raft, and her knowledge was a danger mark for us. Having no answer I made none, but prepared to get out of the run. In a few minutes all hands were in the cabin, and I then sent Steve to notify Captain Knapp. It was his business to deal with the new problem.

Mildred and Olive had embraced affectionately, but the delay was long and there was a war of glances between the unfriendly parties. Finally the steps of two men sounded in the companionway and I heard Knapp ask:

"What are we to do with that confounded queen?"

CHAPTER XIV.

WE SUFFER A SETBACK.

Titicalo's eyes lighted with fury at sound of the captain's voice, but the man who had refused half of her throne did not come nearer. Instead, he sent for me and I went.

"Tom," he said abruptly, "we've got to defer this raft-building. If we put to sea on it we shall have a deadly gale tearing us to pieces in a short time. I never saw another storm gather so quickly as this. All hands are agreed, and we must return to the volcano. It's bad luck, but—well, we must. Are you sure there are no more natives in the run?"

"Ay; sir, absolutely sure."

"Good! There are none elsewhere in the ship. We must have no telltale going about. Titicalo goes with us, a prisoner."

"The queen?" I echoed.

"It must be so. Set her free and we all die. She goes to Hatharo! Now, get your party, including her, on deck," and he hastened away.

I was very doubtful about our conducting Titicalo except by carrying her bodily, but, much to the surprise of all, she accepted the situation with total outward indifference.

On reaching the deck I had a surprise, for the change was almost past belief. It was not so much that the sky had blackened further, but the wind was sweeping boisterously, and, it was said, the water all about the lesser island was running wildly. This was true, and we found it far from easy to cross the strait, but we did it finally.

Afterward, crossing the level and then climbing the mountain, we went with the wind tearing at hair and garments in a way that made me thankful that all thoughts of launching the raft had been abandoned for then.

We reached our refuge without misadventure, and preparations were made for the rest all stood in need of by that time. Captain Knapp suddenly became uneasy and eyed Titicalo in brief uncertainty. Then he spoke with visible reluctance.

"We must have a guard outside, as usual, but all others should sleep to prepare for possible demands upon our resources tomorrow. We cannot spare a second watcher to see that our prisoner does no harm. Madam," and he now addressed the queen, "I deeply regret that the needs of the occasion demand that we put bonds upon you, to make sure of your good behavior."

Titicalo's eyes flamed into indignant light.

"I'll kill the first man who comes near to tie me!" she flashed. "I'll not be bound, for I am a queen!"

"If I may remind you without being misunderstood, I will say that resistance would be useless, but I trust you will see matters in a more amiable light. We will make all as easy for you as possible, for I do not forget that you are a woman, but my men need rest. Seth Styles, be so good as to apply the bonds!"

The sailor's mouth opened wide and he stared at the prisoner in a way really ludicrous, but his sense of obedience was strong, and he slowly stooped and picked up a light rope. Titicalo stood firm, her eyes hot with passion. Ever since childhood she had been supreme on the island, and her idea of her own importance was exaggerated. The indignity of bonds was something she could not accept with composure, and it was well that she was so powerless.

"You coward!" she spat out abruptly, "I'll live to give your vile body to torture for this!"

Knapp was clearly upset by the dilemma, for, though feeling as we all felt that a ruler of cannibals was entitled to scant courtesy, he had profound chivalry and disliked to proceed to extremes, but it occurred to me that the trouble ought to be avoided.

"Beg pardon, sir," I interrupted, "but if you will permit me I'll keep guard over the prisoner."

"But, Tom, you will lose rest you may need later."

"I'll risk that, sir."

"Since you volunteered your offer is gladly accepted," he decided, evidently much relieved. "Now, then, the prisoner shall have yonder room, and you can stay here. She cannot escape, and if she desires she can remain free from your observation. So be it, and now let us get our preparations done. Who will volunteer to stand guard outside?"

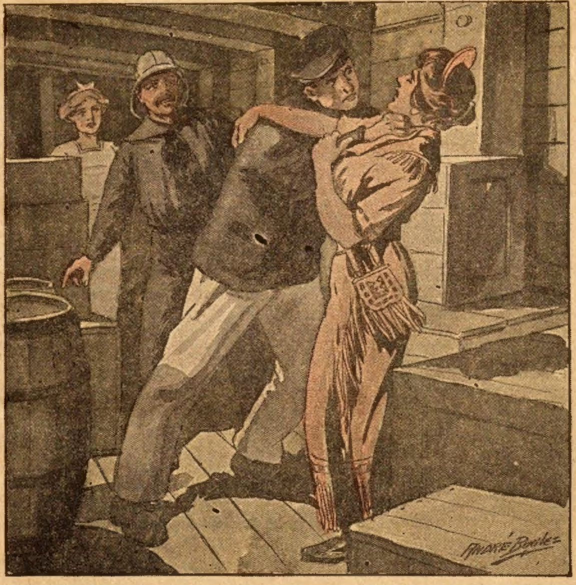
Steve Radd was quick with his answer, and he went to his post. Ten minutes later the only person within my sight was Titicalo. She had not retreated to her room, but sat on a point of rock, regarding me composedly. Another ten minutes passed and then she spoke.

"Sailor Tom, I should have done more wisely had I offered half of my throne to you, instead of to that brute of a man you call captain."

"No man is better than he," I responded stoutly, "but he feels for his men."

"But not for me!"

"He was reluctant to have you bound."



My late adversary was the island queen!

"Oh! he had his way, and whose idea was it? Mine, or yours, or his? Don't talk to me about that scoundrel! I'll live to—well, you shall see! Sailor, I wish we had got the brig Sunshine to sea and sailed away from here. Things go ill with me. Olliro has seduced some of my natives from their loyalty to me, and now I am a captive. It truly goes ill with the queen of this island!"

For the first and last time I saw her in a pensive mood, and I suspected her high spirit was about to suffer a relapse.

"The brig is doomed," I replied. "She will never leave the rocky pocket where she lies wrecked.

"You say well, and even better than you know. I'll tell you now that Olliro, angry because of the check he suffered there, has been again to the cove and set fire to the brig. The Sunshine is in ashes and blackened metal."

"Peace to her!"

"So ends my dream. I hoped to sail away, but it was not to be. Am I fated to live and die among these heathen? We often go far to sea in our canoes, though we have not one that is equal to the average of those other island peoples use, but we lie so far from any other land that the journey would be full of peril. Perhaps," she added, shrewdly, "your party thought of that, too. You could have stolen one of our canoes and put to sea, but you would have been helpless babes. It takes experience to manage canoes, and I fancy your men know nothing about handling them."

She had hit the truth, but I did not confess it.

"One other vessel remains," she presently added. "What about the ship Happy Ann? Is it possible to put her afloat again?"

Not seeing fit to confess that a large force could, with proper implements, convert the adjacent land into a dock and float her after long labor, I briefly replied:

"No human power can do that."

"It does not matter, since I have no sailor. My natives would be as helpless with a ship as you white men in our frail canoes. Let it pass! It does not seem to be my destiny to leave this land. Leave it?" she repeated, and her semi-mild manner gave place to fierceness; "I'll stay here, I'll kill every one of your party, and after that slay Olliro, and when I've cleaned out my stable in that fashion I will rule here a score of years more. Woe, woe to the white man or woman who comes my way!"

She clapped her hands together sharply and the old savage look was in her eyes. She was the fiery Amazon then, in good truth, and no mean goddess of war. I had seen when she grappled with me in the run of the Ann that she had strength nearly equal to that of a man, and further masculine gifts showed in her line of reasoning and bloody purpose.

I was at a loss how to answer, so I said nothing. She did not claim an answer, but accepted the silence, probably without giving it thought. Fixing her gaze on vacancy, she fell into deep thought, her powerful face calm and unreadable. She was still in this mood when a slight sound behind me caused me to look around. I saw Mildred. When she perceived that she had my attention she pressed one hand to her lips as though to enjoin silence, and beckoned with the other. I went and found her agitated, the dim lantern-light revealing a worried light in her eyes.

"Mr. Allen," she asked quickly, "are we safe here?"

"What do you mean?" I asked anxiously.

"I am afraid of the volcano! Something is happening, and it looks ominous. Come with me!"

She turned again and flitted away, and I followed.

This dramatic story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. Read it. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Just an Accident.

Representative Padgett of Tennessee was the ranking Democrat on the naval committee of the House of Representatives, and succeeded Representative Foss of Illinois, a Republican, as chairman of the committee when the Democrats got control of the House.

Foss and Padgett were guests of honor at a dinner of the Naval Militia in Washington. Foss spoke first and joshed Padgett. Foss said he hated to give up the very comfortable naval committee room, but so long as by a political accident the Democrats had a majority, there was no member of the committee he would prefer to give it to than Padgett.

Padgett came next. He said: "The remarks of my esteemed colleague, Mr. Foss, bring to my mind a story I heard about a lynching down South. A mob took a negro from a jail and proceeded with him to the public square where it was proposed to hang him.

"Before the lynching, several of the leading citizens of the town made speeches, commenting on the horrible crime of the negro and the punishment that was to be meted out to him. Then they called on an old and much respected negro resident to say a few words. This old man got up, and addressing himself to the people of his race, said: 'I want all you colored people to take good heed and learn the lesson of the accident that is about to happen here.'"

* * *

The Code Feminine.

As soon as Mrs. Granger was fairly past, Mr. Compton heard an irritated "There! I knew it!" from his wife, and turned to see what was the matter.

"She's just as provoked as she can be to think that Mrs. Lombard and I didn't ask her to go out with us to see the Williams baby!" said Mrs. Compton. "She thinks that it was on account of her having said that she didn't find three weeks' old babies very interesting, when, of course she'd make an exception of Lena Williams' baby. But that wasn't the reason we didn't ask her; it was because we decided all in a hurry, and there was just time to catch the train. She's made up her mind she won't propose our names for the book club!"

"How do you know she thinks all these things?" inquired Mr. Compton.

"My dear, don't you see the way she bowed?" asked his wife, in a pitying tone.

"Why, yes," said Mr. Compton. "I thought she gave a rather more pronounced bow than most women do, and smiled quite brilliantly."

"You dear thing," and Mrs. Compton patted his coatsleeve, "of course she did! That's how I knew exactly what she was thinking."

* * *

Shouldn't Neglect It.

"My daughter, professor, plays entirely by ear."

"And aren't you having her treated for the trouble?"

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The Taxicab Robbery

Or, Celebrated Detective Achievements of Jack Spence, Reporter

By George T Hargreaves

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CHAPTER IV.

THE COUNCIL OF DEATH.

THE pugilist backed to the wall and proceeded to light a cigar. The flame lighted up the narrow room now growing quite gray with approaching nightfall.

"Well," he began, after several long and healthy whiffs, "I ain't much at this blood-letting game except in the ring. I c'n batter a feller up, face, eyes, nose, and ears, with my fists, till he looks as if he'd just come fresh from the slaughterhouse. I like to land one right on the point of the chin that makes a guy's eyes roll around without any sense in 'em. Then I like to biff 'im another on the t'other side of the chin that makes his heels kick into the air and sends him down on his head and his shoulders without any sense of motion er feelin' left in him. I like to knock 'im out so's they ain't any sign o' life left in 'im fer a few minutes, 'cept a bit of a quiver in his eyelids and a sign of a quaver in his legs. That's my style."

The pugilist paused a moment to draw deeply upon his cigar and to note the interest in the faces of his pals. Then he went on, resting one huge fist in pride against his hip as he set his elbow akimbo:

"But I'm willin' to go further with this guy. He seems to think he'd have some chance with his fists. All right, let 'im come on. We'll strip and go at it with bare fists. We c'n do it right here in this room. And we c'n keep it up till there ain't any life left in the one er the t'other o' us. That's givin' him the fair shake he's askin'!"

"Broderic, you ought to have been something else besides a prize-fighter—something where your tongue 'd get a chance to earn a living," laughed Bertrandi. "You can talk better than you can fight. But come on, Joe"—he turned to the quietest member of the quartette, a low-browed, sharp-featured, swarthy-skinned man—"let's hear what you've got to offer."

"Yes, Ladretto," chimed in Braggins, "give us somethin' you brung from Italy."

Ladretto's black and cunning eyes glittered in the dusk. He came across the room and stood close to me—so close that I could smell the heavy odor of liquor upon his breath. Then he gripped the muzzle of Braggins' revolver and drew it harshly across my neck.

"How you lika th' feel of that, eh?" he sneered at me. "That feela good? I know someting gooder. A longa piece of wire, strong like steel. I twista good roun' your white neck. I turn it queeka. It get tight—tight—tight—till you can no make breath. You choke. You get black een th' face. Your hands they claw like a cata. You fall down. You flopa like the feesh out of water. Then you stopa the breath. You lie still. You are ver' dead. Ha! ha! it ees the besta way—the garrote. Eh, fellers, the garrote," and he wound up with a rasp of joy from his hoarse throat.

I can tell you this talk was getting on my nerves by this time. My thinker was busy, too. I saw the room was getting darker and darker. About the only light except from the glowing eyes of the four men who confronted me came from the red glow at the end of Broderic's cigar."

I debated whether or not to attempt a break for liberty. I was only a half-dozen steps from the door. It was closed, to be sure, but in the darkness I felt that I had at least a better chance of getting away than I had by remaining quiet. That, at the least, apparently meant death.

Yet I couldn't bring myself to defy that revolver of Braggins' pressed against my neck. I could dimly discern his finger ready to fire and I knew that in his heart the villain would welcome the chance to let a bullet fly at me. So I decided, as calmly as I could, to hear the discussion out.

"It's my turn, eh?" my tormentor asked, prodding my neck with his weapon for emphasis. "Well, to my idee, there's only one way t' settle this thing satisfactory. Jes' turn the lock in thet door, you three fellers crawl under the table, and let me have just four shots at this guy—jus' four 's all I'm askin'!"

He paused a minute, waiting evidently for consent to his request. But the only sound in the room was the heavy breathing of the four bandits. If I do say it myself, I was the lightest breather in the place.

"Jus' four, I said," Braggins continued, more loudly, "an' I'll guarantee you the fines' corpse you ever see. Come on, fellers, let me open me shootin' gallery."

But still the desired consent was withheld.

"It's particulars you want, eh?" he guffawed. "Well, listen: Wi' the first shot I'll put a neat hole in 'is right leg. Wi' th' second I'll put a neater one t'hough 'is lef' arrum. Wi' th' nex' I'll bore one of his bloomin' sharp eyes out, and wi' th' last I'll plunk a forty-four clean t'rough his damned heart. An' I'll forfeit a hundred dollars out of my divvy fer ev'ry one I miss. Come on, now, wha' d'you think o' thet?"

"It ain't time to answer yet, Bill," interrupted Bertrandi. "You've got to listen to me first."

"An' whatchu got thet's better?" jerked Braggins.

"Fellows," the leader went on quietly, "we can't take any chances putting this guy away. We're in deep enough now. There's ten thousand coppers looking for us. And mind you, we haven't got away with the swag yet. We can't risk raising any more stink about this. Suppose we kill this fellow right here. If we do, we're leaving a mighty dangerous scent. The cops 're likely to hear us and surround us before we could hide our heads. You know what they think of this joint. They're suspicious of it all the time. And they're watching it close. No, I say, we can't afford to do the job here. The noise might give us away, or if that didn't the corpse we'd have to leave would."

"Well, what then?" asked Bill, impatiently.

"The river, boys," Bertrandi went on. "That's the safest. It'll be quiet and easy, and it won't leave no trail. To-night after midnight we'll steal him away with a gag in his mouth, dump him into a boat off Tenth street, row out into the North River, and drop him overboard. That'll be the end of him. He won't come up for a week, and by that time we can be far, far away," and the young wretch wound up with a chortle.

Broderick looked through the gloom at Ladretto, and Ladretto looked at Braggins, who, incensed at his impending failure to get even one shot at me, jabbed his weapon savagely into my neck.

"Well, you're the main guy," he said, gruffly. "I s'pose what you says goes."

And ere I could raise my arms in defense three of them were upon me. They bore me viciously to the floor and thrust a dirty gag in my mouth. Then Braggins thumped down upon my chest and again pushed his pistol into my face.

"Say yer prayers," he chuckled. "You kin expect to be swallying a hull river full of water shortly."

CHAPTER V.

THE HOLD-UPS HELD UP.

Drowning! Well, from all I'd heard it was a pleasant sort of death. It was just like dozing to sleep in a quiet, pleasant dream. So there wasn't to be any pain to my taking off. That was some consolation.

As a matter of fact, I didn't seem to worry so much about my own fate. If I had to be plunged in the river by these bloodthirsty guys, well and good. I'd taken a chance with them and they'd got me. But what did worry me was the situation of Gertrude. When I left her to pursue her own devices in the rooming-house that Bertrandi's frivolous young woman friend had entered, I expected to be back for her in at least an hour. I never thought I'd be caught like a rat in a snare, and that I'd be ducked in the river till I was dead.

So you can imagine how I fretted. But that didn't free the gag from my mouth, nor take off the weight of Braggins from my chest. It was mighty hard breathing, but my four captors didn't seem to mind that a bit.

Bertrandi, who had gone out as soon as Braggins took full possession of me, came back shortly with a lighted candle and a length of rope. With the latter the four of them proceeded to tie my feet stiffly together. Then they rolled me upon my face, and drawing my arms behind me bound my wrists harshly together.

I tried to squirm away, but it did no good to me. It was four against one, and the pugilist among them wasn't at all particular about the way he mauled me. And when they'd finished the job, I was as helpless as any trussed-up carcass of beef that ever hung in a butcher's shop. Yet I was hopeful until they began to run their fingers into my pockets. When they came to my little snub-nosed automatic revolver and dragged it forth with an oath, it seemed as if my last chance had gone.

But when, after a bit, they left me in that dismal room to go below and get some liquor, I got back a piece of my nerve. I rolled myself, as stiff as a log, first one way and then another until I reached the door. I maneuvered until I managed to get my fingers against the casing, but I could not raise them high enough to reach the knob. Then I turned my attention to the window. I wondered if it were not possible to drop through it to liberty without. I rolled across the room until I lay beneath it, but I could do no more. I was unable utterly to get upon my feet. I tried and tried but fell back each time until my knees were as sore as if they had lain under a trip-hammer.

Even then my last resource was not exhausted. The flickering candle light on the table filled me with a new idea. Much of the money that had been heaped there when I first entered the room was gone. The four bandits had made a partial division of their spoils, each man tucking away in his clothes a wad fat enough to choke an elephant.

But there was still a plethoric heap left. From where I lay I could just glimpse the top of it. And it gave me a suggestion. If I had to die, I decided to make my taking off a mighty costly procedure to my captors.

So I took another tack across the room until I lay against the legs of the table. I was just setting myself to give them a violent blow that would hurl the flame of the candle into the heap of currency and start a bonfire of money, when heavy steps sounded on the stairs. In the slight hesitation that followed, I lost my opportunity. Before I could set myself again, the door was thrust open.

"Moved, eh?" snarled Braggins, as he peered beneath the table to where I lay. "Trying to get away, eh?" and approaching me he delivered a kick against my ribs that made me bite my lips to hold back a cry of pain.

Then he picked me up roughly, and uncermoniously dropped me back into the place against the wall where they had first felled me.

"You move again," he warned, "an' I'll drap you out o' the winder. D'you mind?"

I couldn't reply because my mouth was gagged. He didn't seem to think of that, for he gave me a brutal kick in the ribs. And when I looked up at him with daggered eyes, he gave me another in the same place. Say, if I'd been loose, I couldn't have done less than bite him, I was that mad. And it's a cinch my bite would have given him the rabies. For I was just about frothing.

After a while the rest of the gang came back. They had evidently been drinking liberally, for their feet were unsteady and their words were thick. Several times they were near blows as they disputed over the further division of the spoils. But they finally got it counted into four piles, and then stowed it away in their bulging clothes.

They made no pretense of keeping their plans from me. They figured that I was as good as dead anyway, so what was the use of bothering about secrecy?

Braggins, Broderic, and Ladretto planned to sneak out of the city and hide until the police chase for the taxicab bandits eased up. Bertrandi boldly declared that he was going to stay right here in New York.

Incidentally, they lifted the veil of mystery about the crime. The taxicab man, Bertrandi, was innocent. I'd been wrong in my suspicion of him. His shiftless, brutal son was the criminal. From the patches of talk they dropped about the hold-up, I pieced the whole daring affair together.

Bertrandi had learned from his father of his employment to carry the messengers and the funds of the West Side bank. This Saturday he knew of it definitely, for it was he who took the bank's message from the 'phone and delivered it to his father. He had managed to draw

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"To my surprise he called for a third cup, said it was "good stuff" and wanted to know what it was. We have used Postum ever since and both feel better than we have in years.

"My husband used to have bad spells with his stomach and would be sick three or four days, during which time he could not eat or drink anything. But since he gave up coffee and took to Postum, he has had no more trouble, and we now fully believe it was all caused by coffee.

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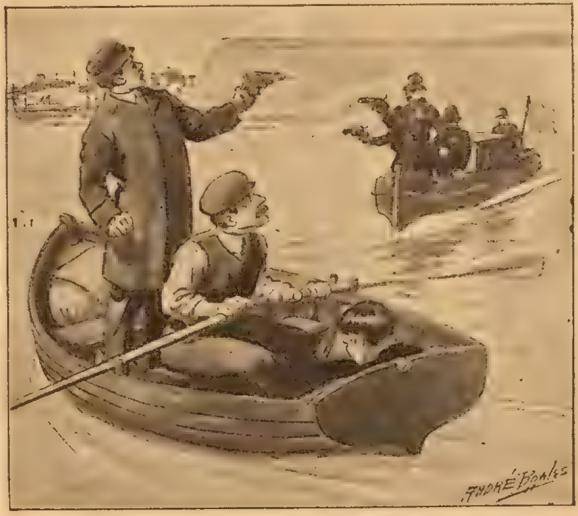
the latter into conversation about the trip, and in that conversation warned him to keep off Broadway on his return trip. Deftly he had urged him to follow the Church street route beneath the elevated structure.

Young Bertrandi then had set to work to pull off the hold-up. He was the moving spirit throughout, yet he assumed little danger. It was he who carried his three pals to the scene in the long black automobile, and sat back in the car a block away, while Braggins and Broderic and Ladretto did the "dirty work." It was Broderic who had mounted the seat beside the driver, Bertrandi's father, and threatened him with death. The other two had stormed into the cab and attacked two messengers.

All this talk served one purpose at least. It kept my mind from the contemplation of my own impending danger and from formulating fears as to Gertrude. In fact, I really felt worse about her possible peril than I did about my own pressing one.

It was midnight when the bandit band, who in their liquored talk had revealed their participation in a half-dozen other crimes, prepared to carry out their design to dispose of me. Frequent trips to the bar below had reduced them to an almost maudlin condition—all except the leader. Either his capacity was enormous, or he was intentionally keeping his head clear for the job ahead.

While Braggins opened the window, Broderic bound a stout rope beneath my shoulders. Then I was lifted to the sill and lowered into the darkness outside. It wasn't a pleasant sensation, I can tell you. I felt somewhat like a fellow might who was being prepared for a hanging.



Bertrandi showed his daredevil spirit.

I struck the ground amid a lot of old cans. I didn't hit it lightly either, believe me. Those guys at the top end of the rope weren't a bit particular about my safety or my comfort. In the gloom and quiet, young Bertrandi dragged me out to an alleyway and forced me into a cab. He was soon joined by his comrades, and, the three of them pushing their way in upon me until I was nigh suffocated with their foul breaths, the young leader mounted the box and drove briskly away.

The night was quite dark now, and the street through which we passed was deserted. There seemed no chance of my summoning aid, even though I might contrive to loosen the gag in my mouth. I was slowly making up my mind to the fatal plunge in the river. I hadn't given up all hope—not me—but I found myself looking forward to a quick death as almost inevitable, and wondering just how I would feel when I was dropped, helpless, into the dumb water, with my voice silenced and my hands and feet bound. It seemed the acme of cruelty not to allow a strong young fellow like I was to make a fight for his life—to die without a chance to save himself.

We hadn't gone a block when the cab stopped with a suddenness that threw the four of us inside into a promiscuous heap. Then I heard Bertrandi rip out a horrible oath. And before we could get straightened out inside, both doors of the cab were violently swung open, and a rasping voice announced quietly:

"Pass over the dough you're loaded with and be d—— quick about it."

My three captors had struggled up onto the seat, leaving me still crumpled in the bottom of the cab. But I lay face upward and saw fairly well what was going on. Ridiculous as it appeared, the taxi hold-up men were being held up for their spoils. Two revolvers flashed at each side of the cab. Two eager faces stood back of them.

"D'you hear, you Braggins, dig up now and quick about it," the rasping voice went on

"Oh, so it's you, Scar-face, is it, eh?" growled Braggins. "How d'you know I've got any?"

"If you'd put less liquor down your throat, you wouldn't have talked so much, Bill," came the reply. I recognized the voice. It was that of Scar-face Jack Hitchens, one of the most notorious "bad men" of the metropolis, a guerrilla, who, with his band of half a dozen desperadoes, broke all the unwritten laws of the underworld of crime. "Talking always was your failing. I heard all about your job, though I'm not telling where. So we thought we'd come over here and be in on the divvy. Come on, fork over."

"This ain't fair Scar-face," peeved Braggins. "We done this job alone. What we gets outen it 's all ours. You ain't got no rights in it."

"Aw, cut out the loose talk!" jerked Hitchens. "We ain't got no time to listen to it. It's the dough we're after. Now, shell out quick," and by way of enforcing his order he jabbed the muzzle of his gun directly into Braggins' frightened eye.

Say, it did my heart good to see that coward taken down. I wanted to see him battered well for the kicks he had piloted against my ribs earlier in the night. Anybody that'll kick a man when he's down and bound up, too!

A shot from outside—sharp and loud on the quiet night air—told us Bertrandi wasn't giving up without a struggle But that didn't stay the hand of Hitchens. He reached in and dragged out Braggins by the neck and tossed him upon the pavement. Then he proceeded to go through his clothes.

"Quick, fellows!" he called to his mates. "The cops'll be down on us in a jiffy."

His two pals needed no urging to attack the two men left with me—Broderic and Ladretto. The former yielded without a mutter, drawing forth bunches of cash and passing them over, as he kept his eyes fastened on the revolver held at his face. But Ladretto showed himself a different kind of a desperado. He dodged back into the corner of the cab, and when man and revolver followed him, he lunged forward and tried to throw his arms about the foe's neck. It was a fatal move. The revolver snapped, and when the smoke partially cleared, I saw the Italian flounder back helplessly. At the same instant there came a warm drip upon my cheek. I knew what it was—Ladretto's blood. Before the assailant could get his hand within his victim's pocket, Scar-face cried sharply:

"The cops are coming, vamoose."

And as the steps of the desperado and his gang retreated, I heard the running feet of approaching police. I began to breathe more freely despite my awkward position. Rescue was near apparently and with it the capture of the taxi bandits and a big scoop for the Star.

By my hopes fell almost instantly. For Bertrandi, with one hand done up in a white handkerchief, suddenly appeared at the door of the cab, jammed Braggins in on us, slammed the door, and remounting the box drove hurriedly away.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BATTLE ON THE RIVER.

You'd better believe I felt mighty bad when I realized that the cab was rolling away again. It wasn't only the danger ahead of me that hurt. It was tough enough to know that I was bound for a cold douse and a lonely death in the

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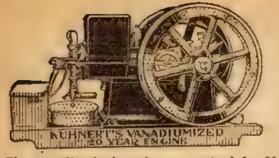

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North River with no chance to make a fight for my life. But it was a blamed sight worse to be going to that death in a position so jammed and painful that I began to doubt that I would reach the riverside alive.

There I lay in the very bottom of the cab, bound hand and foot so tightly that I wasn't able to move in the cramped position into which I had been thrown. Two pairs of the feet of the blackguards who had captured me rested heavily upon my chest and legs. From the wound of another of the bandits the blood dripped down into my face.

And the gag in my mouth prevented me from making any outcry or begging that I be moved into a more comfortable and less nauseating shape. Of course, it is to be doubted that the unfeeling thugs would have eased me a whit. They aren't given to making things pleasant for the guys who try to run them into jail. But it would have been some satisfaction and relief to me to be able to call attention to my distress.

The cab pitched and careened over the rough cobble pavement for many blocks, it seemed to me. Every jerk added to my pain, for with every jerk the feet that were making a footstool of my body thumped deeper into my flesh. But the ride ended at last in the shadow of a long pier building. The next moment Bertrandi threw open a door of the cab and whispered:

"Out with you all quick now! We've lost the cops, but they may be down on us any moment."

Braggins scrambled to the pavement with a grunt. "The dago's done for," he muttered. "He's plunked in the chest near the heart."

The young leader of the bandits swore roundly.

"Aw, he's no worse off than I am. I've got a hole clean through my hand."

But when, after Broderic had got out—which he didn't do without caving in my chest with one of his massive feet—they tried to lift Ladretto out also, they found he was in critical shape. He had lost consciousness completely.

"He's getting as cold as a hunk of ice, too," growled Braggins as he felt of the wounded man's face. "I'll be blamed if I don't think he'll be a corpse mighty quick."

"We'll have to leave him behind then," responded Bertrandi. "We'll have trouble enough getting away with this other guy ourselves."

"Better leave him, too," suggested Broderic.

"And let him blab the whole thing to the cops?" retorted the leader angrily. "Not much. We'll settle him if we're pinched in doing it. We can duck him, anyway, while we're making our getaway."

He paused an instant to set his ears to listen. Even where I was I could hear the faint tat-tat of running feet.

"They're still after us," he muttered rapidly. "Get the dough in Ladretto's clothes quick."

Imminent as was the danger he didn't purpose to leave without saving the spoils of their crime. Braggins ran his hands hurriedly through the clothes of Ladretto and extracting all of that worthy's share of the booty which Scarface Hitchens and his gang had left, he handed it over to Bertrandi, who proceeded to tuck it away in his already bloated pockets.

Then they dragged me out unceremoniously. I landed on my back in the street with a thump that made me see a fine array of stars. Braggins slammed the cab door shut upon the wounded Ladretto, while Bertrandi thrust a fat bill into the cabman's fist, and ordered him to drive away at a furious rate in order to deceive the police into trailing him.

As the vehicle clattered away the three bandits, Bertrandi, Braggins, and Broderic, grabbed me up roughly, and hastened deeper into the shadow of the pier building. They finally laid me down on a narrow ledge of wharf, where I could hear the water lapping the piles below.

"Fetch out the boat," ordered the leader.

The two men hastened away. I could now hear the feet of the pursuing cops close at hand. I twisted and wriggled my face frantically in an effort to loosen the gag. A single cry now, I realized, might save my life. It was my last chance. But the gag held firm, and with Bertrandi sitting upon my chest to keep me quiet as I struggled to flop around, I was compelled to listen to the retreating footsteps of the police.

The silence that followed was soon broken by the swish of a pair of oars through the water.

"Drop in," a voice muttered hoarsely from below.

Thereupon I was roughly rolled to the edge of the pier and pushed unceremoniously over the edge. I landed with a jar that shook me from hair's end to toe nails, striking on my shoulder. For a bit, until they rolled me into the stern, I thought the arm was dislocated, but when I wanted to use it to work myself into an easier position I found it was whole, but terribly painful. In the darkness Braggins rowed the boat away

"Straight across," Bertrandi whispered crossly. "We'll dump him when we strike midstream, and then keep on to Jersey City till this stink blows over."

The man at the oars started a guttural reply, but paused abruptly before the first word was fully framed. From where I lay I saw the reason. A shaft of white light, broad and powerful, cut like a knife through the darkness, and set squarely upon the astonished face of Braggins. As he blinked in fright and stopped rowing, there came the hoarse whisper of Bertrandi:

"The police boat. They're looking for us." Then, as Braggins continued to blink and lay still on his oars, the young leader went on: "Get busy, you fool! They'll be down on us in a jiffy."

And as the light tilted away, the oarsman once more bent to his work. But the light pursued him relentlessly. He had not rowed more than a score of strokes, either, before there came across the water the sharp, short blast of a whistle, and in another minute I could hear the water foaming at the bow of an approaching craft.

Braggins showed his yellow. Bertrandi was as cool as if on a pleasure ride. Broderic, deep in the bow, threatened to take the oars unless more speed was made.

"It's all up," panted Braggins. "Let's quit the boat."

"I can't swim a stroke," growled Broderic. "I'd sink in a minute, even before the cops could get to me."

Bertrandi, in the stern seat, quickly drew out his gun, and rested it upon his knee with the muzzle pointing toward his two pals.

"Keep cool, fools!" he hissed. "And keep busy, too. We ain't going to give in to those guys until we have a brush with them. We'll fight our way out of this if you don't lose you heads."

But the dart of the police boat searchlight athwart the bandits' boat again upset them

"What's the use?" grunted Braggins. "I'm wasting breath. They'll be on top of us before we can dive if we don't dive quick."

I saw the weapon of Bertrandi flash threateningly as he raised it to the level of his chest. I tried to squeeze myself deeper into the bottom of the boat. I was blamed uneasy about being in the line of fire. I figured that revolver might wabble a bit if it was discharged, and at that close range I was more likely than not to get nipped. But I felt more comfortable when the crafty young leader said:

"You keep rowing till I tell you to stop, if you don't want me to put a hole through you big enough for that searchlight to get through."

Braggins muttered an inaudible reply and bent anew to the oars. But there was another interruption in a minute. Across the water came the hoarse call: "Rowboat, ahoy! Lay to till we come up with you."

"What'll I do?" asked Braggins, in a pant. "Stop?"

I saw the flash of Bertrandi's steel-blue gun. It was stretched forward until it wasn't a foot away from the oarsman's head.

"Keep a-going," hissed Bertrandi, savagely, winding up with an oath. "Or I'll send you where you'll never do any more rowing."

The flashlight was now set full upon us. We lay revealed as in daylight. There was no way to escape the police. Yet, in sheer bravado, Bertrandi drove Braggins at the oars.

Again the order came across the rapidly narrowing gap: "Rowboat, ahoy! Lay to, or we'll shoot!"

And in another minute, when the command was still ignored, there came the crack of a pistol shot and the chilling "zip" of the bullet as it struck the water beside us.

Still Bertrandi was defiant. He was more. He was belligerent. Turning in his seat, he raised his revolver to the level of his eyes and fired directly at the three figures which stood in the bow of the police boat.

A low cry and a loud curse showed the bullet had struck one of the figures. Then there followed three shots almost as one. One bullet struck an oar and dashed it from the grasp of Braggins. Another nipped his ear, for in the dazzling light I could see the blood drip. The third went through the bottom of the boat and permitted the water to rush in.

Bertrandi fired back once—twice—thrice. Broderic in the bow also drew his gun and joined the fusillade. The police returned the fire with interest. Almost in the flash of an eye a lively revolver battle was on.

Bertrandi showed his daredevil characteristics by rising to his feet and hastening his fire. Braggins was not so bold. He crouched as low beneath the gunwale as his size would permit, but he managed to rest his weapon against a seat, and he popped as rapidly as his chief.

Every instant I expected to feel the cut of a bullet somewhere in my hide. Suddenly my right foot felt moist. I was sure I was wounded until I realized that the dampness was chill. Then I knew it was from the water pouring into the boat. Braggins noticed the impending peril at the same moment. He called hoarsely to Bertrandi:

"They've shot the bottom full of holes We'll be sinking in a jiffy."

"Duck then, if you're afraid," replied the chief.

The words were barely out of his mouth before his two pals slipped noiselessly over the side of the settling craft and started to swim away. Bertrandi turned and looked down at me with savagery in his eyes. Then he stooped.

(Continued on page twenty-five.)

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THE THIRD PARTNER

Or, The Missing Money

By Will Lisenbee

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Begun in No. 41, October 12. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents or by mail from the office of publication.

PART II.

I REMAINED there a week, hoping that the robber would be caught," continued Frank, "but no trace of him was discovered. When I realized that with the money he had he might have bribed to silence many who might have captured him, I lost hope.

"This put me in an ugly hole. To return a part of the money would, I had no doubt, cause old Brand to discredit my statement, and doubtless result in my being suspected of having participated in the robbery.

"The loss of the money was no fault of the bank's, and how could I replace it? I had but a few hundred dollars of my own, and with no prospects of earning more.

"While I was puzzling my brain over the matter and deploring my misfortune, a sudden idea came to me. It offered a way out of the hole if it should pan out as I hoped.

"About a couple of years ago my brother Dick went to Arizona. He had consumption. While living in the hills in the hope of being benefited he discovered a mine which he believed to be very rich, but he died without developing the mine. He wrote to me about it before he died, and gave me the name and address of a Mexican who had helped him with the work and would take me to the mine. He asked me to take charge of the mine and develop it, believing it would make my fortune.

"I never believed much in mines—that is the mine exploited by the average mining company—and looked on them as schemes to get the money out of a lot of suckers the Fool-killer had overlooked. My brother knew something about mines, however, and I had faith in his judgment.

"It now occurred to me that if I could open the mine it might give me a chance to replace the money belonging to the Springtown Bank. It was my only hope, and so I set out for Arizona. I landed in Benson a week later, where I expected to find Manuel Perrigo, the Mexican mentioned by my brother Dick, but I found that he had gone to San Rafael to visit relatives.

"And now, Reddy, that is how it all happened—how I chanced to come to this place. Manuel Perrigo is at present absent, having gone into the mountains for a week. So I must remain here for the time being."

I listened to Frank's story with interest and a feeling of relief. It was gratifying to know that old Brand was not hunting me down, and this relieved me of a lot of mental worry. Under the circumstances I was glad that Frank had come. His coming had brought, as it were, a breath from the outside world. I proclaimed a holiday and I did the honors. I introduced Frank to the alcalde, and he gave us the freedom of the city, and Frank Delano—they called him Francisco Delano—made a hit. Again I began to enjoy life.

Frank brought news from Springtown that was a little surprising. Richard Brand, he told me, had, according to information received, pulled the bank out of the hole, and had increased its capital to $50,000. That led me to believe that I had been mistaken in suspecting the banker of crooked work.

Frank was enthusiastic over the mine, and he produced some specimens which his brother had sent him. I know something about ores, and the richness of the specimens excited my interest. I offered to put a thousand dollars into the enterprise for an interest in the mine, and as Frank was short of funds, he gladly accepted.

"If it pans out all right," he said, "it will put us both on Easy street. But I'll not blow your money in till I find out that it will pay, and you may depend on that."

As Frank was in such a hurry to get back to the mine, he now declared his intention to go up into the mountains and see Perrigo and from there return to Arizona and begin work in the mine. He took his departure the next day, and in consequence I experienced a feeling of loneliness and isolation, which only found relief in multiplying my visits to the home of the alcalde where I always found a smiling welcome from Felipa.

It is a sad thing to be idle in a Mexican town. I had but little practice in my profession, and I found that nothing could beguile the tedium of the hours so well as the pretty daughter of the alcalde. I grew depressed when not in her presence, and this set me to thinking of a number of things.

The little affair with Brand worried me. He had re-established himself before the people. He might be revengeful and make trouble for me, after all. His inexplicable silence about the affair with him worried me. Had he condemned me and said things I should have felt more at ease. It is the danger that lies in ambush that tries the soldier's courage more than that of the battlefield. I remembered that I had called him a rogue. I could not believe he had forgotten it. He might be only waiting for a chance to nab me at the first opportunity. With this uncertainty hanging over me, I was not sure I was not committing an act of folly in paying my respects to Felipa.

My calmer judgment told me to cut it out. But my calmer judgment, as is always the case under similar circumstances, was in a hopeless minority. I could not give up the girl. I reviewed the matter from both the moral and ethical side, but it was no go. Old Brand might convince the world and the jury that I had committed an offense, but my own conscience was clear, and there was love weighing down the scales on my side, and I threw old Brand and the law to the winds of heaven and asked Felipa to marry me.

That was a golden hour when she put her hands in mine, and I heard from her red lips the words that told me she would be mine. I forgot everything else, even the menacing shadow of old Brand's wrath, and I surrendered myself body and soul to the joys of love's young dream.

The remembrance of those golden moments still lingers, and there is but one shadow of a cloud to obscure the perfect felicity of it all, and that was cast by the alcalde, who broke in on the scene. The evidences of mutual affection between his daughter and myself must have been witnessed by him, for he asked me to take a stroll with him.

As we walked under the shadows of the palms he unburdened himself to me. He drew up to the subject with a fine shade of delicacy that would have put a French count's plea for alimony to shame, and with a show of diplomacy one would hardly expect in regions so remote from the haunts of polite hypocrisy and embalmed conscience.

He had witnessed, he told me, the evidence of affection existing between his daughter and myself, and he thought it his duty to mention a little matter that would be of interest to me. Felipa, he went on to say, was an only child, and he was constrained to guard her destiny with much care. He wanted to provide for her future so that when he was gone she should not have to herd goats. That was the great fear of the better class of his country, he explained; an unfortunate condition which at times made them seem hard and calculating. But he hoped I would understand.

There was another man in the case, he finally hinted, Don Jose something or other—who was the proprietor of a thousand goats. He had paid his respects to Felipa and was ready to fulful the requirements. So if I should entertain thoughts of matrimony, it would be necessary for me to make a little deposit with him—say a thousand dollars—American money—to be kept for the benefit of the girl as a sort of guarantee of good faith. He was sorry to broach the subject, he declared, but his daughter's welfare was at stake.

He did not like to seem mercenary. It was not the nature of the Latin race. Their lives were the reflection of the picturesque, the romantic; a nation of dreamers, thinking more of the beauties of life, its perfume and enchantment, than of commercial aggression. But the seeds of greed, he said, had been transplanted into his country by those who came from the North—whose canons had been directed against a girl marrying a man who could bring her nothing but a suit in bankruptcy.

I heard the spiel of the alcalde with emotion. It shocked and disillusioned me. So the trail of the serpent was over them all? Even in the archaic San Rafael the call of the dollar rose to disturb the languor of the dreamer and the romantic? But I did not intend to put up any kick. I would stay in the game. I was not the one to be bluffed out by a goat man. Felipa was worth the price of the ante, and I told the alcalde that my chips would be on the layout at the proper time. And so the matter was settled, and I surrendered myself to the joys of love's young dream. But there were times when I dreamed of the goat man and was sorely distressed least he should raise my ante.

As the weeks went by I devoted myself to my profession and to Felipa. I heard from Frank now and then, and he reported that he had opened the mine and was pushing the work. He advised me to come to Arizona and join him in the work of developing the mine, but I wrote him I would wait till the worth of the mine was more fully demonstrated.

It was early in October that he wrote me that he had made a big strike and advised me to come at once, giving me

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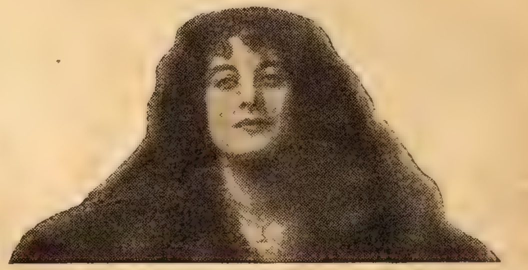

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I'm the happiest little woman,
In all this little town;
And my merry laugh and singing,
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For JOHN HAS QUIT HIS DRINKING
And is like himself once more,
And the world is just a paradise
With such happiness in store!

One day I read some verses—
"Mary's Miracle," the name,
And I said, that's John exactly,
And I'll send and get the same.
So I sent for GOLDEN REMEDY,
(As sly as sly could be)
And I put it in John's supper
And I put it in his tea.

And it didn't taste a little bit;
Had no odor, so, you see—
It was smoothest kind of sailing
For little Doctor Me.
And I watched and prayed and waited,
(And cried some, too, I guess),
And I didn't have the greatest faith,
I'm ashamed now to confess.

And John never thought a minute,
He was being cured of drink,
And soon he's as well as any one,
It makes me cry to think!
Just makes me cry for gladness,
I'm so proud to be his wife—
Since he is cured of drinking,
And leads a nice, new life

"Since John he quit a-drinking!"
I can't say it times enough!
And hates and loathes a liquor
As he would a poison stuff.
And when I say my prayers at night
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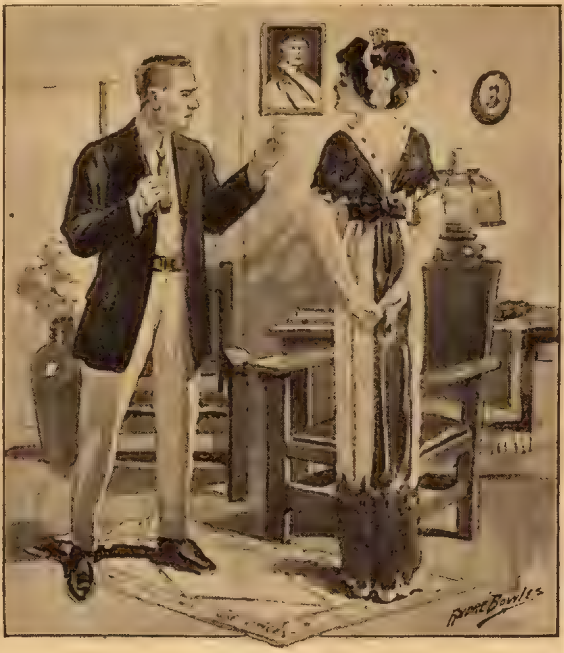
specific directions for reaching the place. He had been compelled, he wrote, to take in another partner, as the cost of opening the mine had proved to be much greater than he had anticipated. He had bought a lot of machinery from a defunct mining company near-by at a bargain, and had a reduction plant in operation

I packed my grip for the trip and went over to communicate the news of my good fortune to Felipa and the alcalde. But in my transport of joy I learned something that filled me with a vague sense of suspicion that Frank Delano was deceiving me. Felipa had picked up a little trinket which she said had been dropped by Frank when he last visited the home of her father, and she had forgotten to have it returned to him. She thrust the trinket into my hand, and I examined it with keen interest. A single glance at the little trinket was sufficient to establish its identity. It was a detective's badge!

Gradually the conviction forced itself upon me. Frank Delano was simply a tin-horn detective! one of those Jim Crow sleuth hounds of the law, who have a certificate from some fake detective agency and imagine themselves another Allan Pinkerton.

I turned the matter over and over in my mind. Was Frank Delano simply playing a game? And was old Brand behind him? I could not free my mind from the harassing suspicion that such was the case. Were all his stories but a string of fiction concocted with the intention to lure me out of Mexican territory? I thought I could see through the whole game. And yet the absurdity



It was a detective badge!

of it all would rush upon me at times, fogging my mind with a bewildering maze of contradictory conjectures.

I said nothing about this to Felipa or the alcalde. I would respond to Frank's call and go to Arizona at once, but I would be on my guard and take him unawares. If my suspicions should prove true, then I would have it out with him then and there. A week later I was in Los Palmos. From there I proceeded to Midland Wells, where I procured a guide and a couple of burros. Then we went into the hills.

It was nightfall when he drew near the little valley in which the mine was said to be located. I saw a light through the gathering dusk and the outlines of a cabin. Instructing the guide to wait, I walked up the slope to the cabin.

I approached the cabin with great stealth. I crept to the window and looked in. The room was lighted by a kerosene lamp, and near a rude table sat Frank Delano. His back was to the window and an open letter was in his hand. I could see the engraved heading of the letter. It was that of the Springtown Bank!

So he had been communicating with old Brand and was ready for me to fall into his net. The sight of the letter convinced me that my suspicions were correct. It gave me great satisfaction to think that I could now walk in on him and turn the tables on him. I almost laughed outright as I thought of his falling into his own net, and of how I should work a little surprise on him just as I had on Brand and compel him to pay over to me the money of mine he had obtained through duplicity.

I opened the door and walked in. He rose with a bound as I entered. He pressed my hand till my fingers ached Then he pushed me into a chair beside a table which was loaded with a fine assortment of grub.

"I knew you'd be glad to have a taste of civilized grub once more," he rattled on in his fluent way, "and I have collected the finest assortment of good American grub that ever got into the desert—pork and beans, biscuits, olives good corned beef and a whole string of other good things not found in San Rafael. Sit up, and when you have worked through these courses we'll try some cigars while I tell you of a little surprise I have in store!"

This was sure the limit! I put out my hand to stop him.

"I know what your little surprise is," I said, "and so as to be as good as you are, I have a little surprise for you.

"For me?" he asked

"Just you."

I drew the detective's badge from my pocket and laid it before him.

He looked at it in perplexity. "You have sure got me guessing," he said finally. "What's your hallucination?"

"It is not a very clever Jim Crow game you are playing," I said, trying to keep my temper.

"I?" says he.

"Nobody else. This little trinket which you dropped at the alcalde's house gave you away. Your role as amateur detective was not very successful. What does old Brand give you for being a [illegible]"

"What the hell are you trying to get through you?" he demanded. His color rose a little as he spoke.

"Don't try to bluff," I advised. "You can't deny that you are in the employment of old Brand and——"

"Good God!" he cried, making a gesture of impatience. "Is it possible that you have no more sense than to think that?"

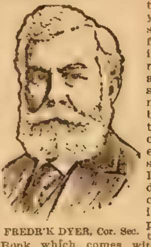
I eyed him searchingly. I pointed to the badge. "That speaks for itself," I said.

"Come, Reddy, don't be a fool," he implored. "You ought to go back to Springtown and take absent treatment. This is the second time you have accused me of being in the employ of Brand as a detective. Are you going to let it become chronic?"

"That depends," I replied. "Go on and make your defense if you have any." I pointed to the badge.

A curious smile came over his face.

"When I was a boy," he began, "I got it into my head that I would like to be a detective, but I soon got over it. I ran across that old badge in the lining of an old pocketbook given to me by my father and I threw it away. You have been playing detective yourself it seems, and you must own to it that you don't cut a very enviable figure. Suppose you cut all that foolishness out and talk business. This sort of dope is getting on my nerves. I have been in communication with Brand, and as I told you in my letter, I have a little surprise for you. Read these and then we'll talk."



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We positively give FREE a STEM WIND, STEM SET BEAUTIFUL ENGRAVED, Watch, equal in appearance to a Solid Gold Watch, guaranteed 5 years, and a Beautiful Ring for selling 20 beautiful, imported, oriental, inlaid novelty hat pins at 10c each. Order 20 today and when sold send us $2 and we will positively give you the Watch, Ring and Chain.

WALLS MFG. CO., DEPT. C 8 CHICAGO

SONG-POEMS wanted. Cash or royalty to you. Needham Music House, 44 S, St. Louis Mo.

Are You FAT? I Was ONCE. I Reduced MYSELF.

I was Fat, Uncomfortable, Looked Old, Felt Miserable, suffered with Rheumatism, Asthma, Neuralgia. When I worked or walked, I puffed like a Porpoise. I took every advertised medicine I could find. I Starved, Sweated, Exercised, Doctored and changed climate but I ruined my digestion, felt like an invalid but steadily gained weight. There was not a single plan or drug that I heard of that I did not try. I failed to reduce my weight. I dropped society, as I did not care to be the butt of all the jokes. It was embarrassing to have my friends tell me I was getting Stout, as no one knew it better than myself.

SOMETHING HAD TO BE DONE

I began to study the cause of FAT. When I discovered the cause I found the remedy. The French Method gave me an insight. I improved on that. Removed the objectional features, added more pleasant ones, and then I tried my plan on myself for a week. It worked like Magic. I could have

SCREAMED WITH JOY

at the end of the first week when the scales told me I had lost ten pounds by my simple easy, harmless, Drugless Method. It was a pleasure then to continue until I regained my normal self in size. I feel fifteen years younger. I look fifteen years younger. My Double Chin has entirely disappeared. I can walk or work now. I can climb a mountain. I am normal in size. I can weigh just what I want to weigh. I am master of my own body now. I did not starve, but eat all I wanted to. I did not take Sweat Baths, I did not Drug. I used no Electricity, or harmful exercises, but I found the Simple, Sane, Common Sense WAY of reducing my weight and I applied it. I have tried it on others. My Doctor says I am a perfect picture of health now. I am no longer ailing. I am now a happy, healthy woman. Now I am going to help others to be happy. I have written a book on the subject. If you are fat, I want you to have it. It will tell you all about my Harmless, Drugless Method. To all who send me their name and address I mail it FREE, as long as the present supply lasts. It will save you Money, Save you from Harmful Drugs, Save you from Starvation Diets, Harmful Exercises, possibly save YOUR LIFE. It is yours for the asking without a penny. Just send your name and address. A Postal Card will do and I'll be glad to send it so that you can quickly learn how to reduce yourself and be as happy as I am. Write to-day as this advertisement may not appear again in this paper.

HATTIE BIEL, 590 Barclay, Denver, Colo.

$10.00 EASY A DAY EARN MORE MONEY

Dress Better

Thousands wear such good clothes their friends hardly know them. Thousands prosper and are happy, their pockets jingling with money. Thousands have built up a tailoring business of their own. Thousands are doing it, why not YOU?

No Experience Necessary

You don't have to be an expert tailor. We teach you. Our methods are so simple we can guarantee a perfect fit or refund your customer's money if not satisfied. With our swell, new Fall and Winter tailoring outfit—Samples—Instructions Order Blanks — Stationery — Fashion Portfolio—Tape Line—any man can make a big income and wear better clothes.

Work In Your Spare Time only until you are convinced that our proposition pays better than your present job.

You Take No Risk—You can't lose. You are under no obligation, you send no money, sign no contract, make no promises.

Our Big, New Fall Tailoring Outfit is FREE

Free as the air you breathe. Just write that you want to see our new line and it will be sent to you, transportation prepaid.

Someone is going to take orders with the new *Cosmopolitan* line in your neighborhood, is going to make big money as our representative. Will it be you, or someone else? Better write today and connect with the one tailoring firm that stands behind you with a guarantee of satisfaction or your money back. We prepay express on everything.

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Watches, Rings, Shoulder Shawls, Lace Curtains, Locket & Chains, Moving Picture Machines, Cameras, Bracelets, Dinner Sets, Silverware, Rifles, Etc., given for selling our high grade

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at 10c each. Famous works of art, such as "Christ is Head of this House," "Birth of Christ," "The Lord is my Shepherd," "Faith, Hope and Charity, "Guardian Angel," "Christ Blessing Little Children," "Lord's Supper," "Rock of Ages," and other beautiful pictures in natural colors, with appropriate mottoes. Originals cost thousands of dollars. Not a trashy picture in the lot. Size 12x16 inches. You Will Sell Our Famous Pictures, Where You Failed to Sell Others. Send for 20 of our handsomest pictures, specially selected, and large illustrated premium list. You can sell them in 10 minutes. Send us $2, and premium will be sent at once. MONEY BACK IF NOT SATISFIED.

ALTON WATCH & MDSE. CO., Dept. 1887 Chicago

Farmers Sons Wanted with knowledge of farm stock and fair education to work in an office; $80 a month with advancement, steady employment, must be honest and reliable. Branch offices of the association are being established in each state. Apply at once, giving full particulars. The Veterinary Science Association, Dept. 22, London, Canada.

PLAYS LARGE LIST, Dialogues, Recitations, Entertainments, Drills. Catalog free. T. S. DENISON & CO., Dept. 6, Chicago.

He tossed me some documents. I picked them up and read the contents in silence. One of the documents was a confession made by Horace Shipp, one of the men associated with my father in business at the time of his failure. The confession acquitted Brand of any connection with the job that brought about my father's ruin. It stated that he (Shipp) was the guilty one. There was a brief letter from Brand addressed to me in which he stated that he did not intend to threaten me when he said that I would be sorry for my act in compelling him to pay the five thousand at his home that night. He merely meant that I would regret my rash act when I discovered that by only waiting a day or two I might have had my money without employing such rash measures to get it.

"And now," went on Frank, when I had finished reading the letter, "if you will but listen to me I shall make everything plain. When I arrived here and looked into the mine I saw that it was better than I had ever suspected. I also found out that it would require more capital to develop it than I had at my disposal. Then I took a long shot—and put the bank's money into the enterprise!

"That five thousand dollars enabled me to buy the machinery at the old mine across the valley, and I struck the biggest sort of thing ever found in Arizona. We ran into a pocket that was almost pure gold, and in three weeks we took out $30,000. Then I expressed the ten thousand dollars to the bank at Springtown and explained the whole transaction, explaining to Brand how the bank's money had got into my possession and the reason for my not returning it sooner. As I had used the bank's money to develop the mine, I thought it was no more than just that the bank should have a share in the business and so I made over to Brand an equitable share of the mine, and so notified him when the ten thousand was sent.

"The Springtown Bank now has an income of more than $5,000 per month from the mine, and you and I together about $25,000. It has been a pretty good thing all around. Brand, who is the third partner I mentioned in my letter, is tickled to death, and I am expecting him to arrive any day. Now, if you will read this letter I got from Brand and also look over our bank account at the bank in Benson, we'll have some supper."

I read the letter, looked over the bank book, and put up a white flag. It was the only creditable thing I could do.

"I guess I have made a burro of myself," I confessed, "and I appoint you my guardian without bond."

"Good boy!" chuckled Frank. "Now get outside of this grub and we'll sample some of those Mexican cigars and cast our horoscope."

That is about all there is to tell. The mine behaved beautifully and is putting us on Easy street. So the God of Gold has smoothed out the wrinkles of a crinkled life, yet the sordidness of it all is softened by the beckoning hand of Love—Love which giveth love and asks but love in return.

And Frank? He dreams of a seat in the Senate. But as for me—well, I am going back to San Rafael, and the shadow of the goat man no longer haunts me in my dreams.

The End.

* * *

A Remarkable Career.

When the washerwoman's husband sidled around the corner of the house and sat down heavily on a bench in the shade there was the little boy who lived next door.

"How do you do, Three Fingered Jack?" said the little boy, laying down his catcher's mitt and approaching the great man diffidently.

"Howdy?"

"I have been thinking since I talked with you before," said the little boy.

"What for?"

"I have been thinking that I should like to hear the story of how you lost your fingers."

"Why, lessee. I lost them fingers in the Civil War. You see, I was commandin' a gun in th' battle o' Bull Run——"

"Why did they call it Bull Run?"

"That's a kinda funny story, too. I was reconnoiterin' the enemy one day about sunup an' I was goin' through a thicket unbeknownst to the enemy when all of a sudden I stepped right on the tail of a great enormous big red bull——"

"Ooo-oo! Were you frightened?"

"Naw, I never git frightened o' nuthin'. But the bull jumped up with his head down an', thinkin' he was aimin' to attack me. I jumped in an' grabbed him by the horns an' we struggled all around through the underbrush, me a-rubbin' the bull's nose in the dirt all the time. After awhile I let go to git a better holt an' th' bull run. You see, the bull was ascairt of me an' tryin' to get away, while I thought he was tryin' to attact me. An' then the enemy seen the bull a-runnin' an' they sent a party o' skirmishers to see what had skeered th' bull, an' when they got near I jumped out at 'em, pretendin' I was commandin' a regiment, an' yelled: 'Holler 'nuff, er I'll make you walk the plank!' An'——"

"You should have said: 'Surrender.'"

"I know, but I was excited."

"And what did you mean about making them walk the plank?"

"You shouldn't ask so many questions—you get me all mixed up. I said I'd make 'em walk the plank because, just fer a minute I was thinkin' I was on the pirate ship that I used to command before the war."

"But about your fingers——"

"Oh, yes, about my fingers. I lost 'em fightin' Injuns. I told Old Holeintheground——"

"Was that really his name?"

"Sure."

"Wasn't it Willie Holeintheground or Charlie Holeintheground or something like that?"

"No, just Holeintheground."

"That's funny."

"Then why ain't you laughin'?"

"I beg your pardon. I should have said it was strange."

"All right, but don't interrupt me so much. I told Old Holeintheground that if he didn't free the pale face maiden I would draw my trusty weepin' an' not sheathe it ag'in till all th' redskins was in the happy huntin' grounds."

"All of 'em?"

"Sure."

"The grandpa and the grandma Indians?"

"Sure. They'll all varmints."

"The papa and the mamma Indians?"

"Every last one of them; they ain't no good!"

"The little boy and the little girl Indians?"

"Yep, an' the family dog."

"And did you?"

"No. Old Holeintheground seen I meant business an' he drawed his knife and freed the captive maiden and——"

"I'm glad you didn't kill all the little Indians, anyhow."

"You're too soft-hearted. You'd never make an Injun slayer."

"But you said you lost your fingers at the battle between the Bigfeet and the Blackfeet."

"When did I say that?"

"Last week."

"Oh, that was the first time I lost 'em."

"And then you told me you lost them at the battle of Bull Run."

"That was the second time I lost 'em. I was a-standin' out there all alone in th' face o' the chargin' enemy, with my fingers graspin' the trigger of the cannon, afraid of nothin' on earth, when—"

"You John!" came a strident voice.

"Yessum?"

"You git in here an' swing on to the handle of this wringer! If I am goin' to spend my life in suds up to my elbows to cover your back you gotta turn the wringer for me!"

"Does she cover your back with suds?" asked the little boy.

"Naw, that's just her way o' talkin'!"

"Well, it was a splendid story, anyhow, and I shall never forget how you lost your fingers," said the little boy, picking up his catcher's mitt and starting away.

* * *

Imparted Valor to a Mouse.

A new arrival strolled into the lobby of a popular Muskogee hotel a few evenings ago and walked rather unsteadily to the desk to register. Turning to follow the porter to his room, there was a crash, and bits of glass and an amber colored liquid spread along the floor.

Before a porter could be summoned to mop it up a tiny mouse crept from under the cigar counter and lapped greedily at the liquor. Then mounting the edge of a cuspidor, the mouse exclaimed:

"Where is that cat that was looking for me last night?"

Pimples Ruin Good Looks

But Cheer Up! In a Short Time Stuart's Calcium Wafers Transform Worst Complexions Into Perfect Loveliness.

Many a sigh and heartache have been caused by pimples. But never mind. You will shortly get rid of all those spots and blemishes by using Stuart's Calcium Wafers.

The action of these Wafers is wonderful. They make the skin breathe out just as your lungs expel impurities. Every minute of the day and night these wonderful Wafers keep the pores busy.

Instead of clogging the pores in the form of pimples, blackheads, eczema, rash, liver spots and other skin eruptions, these impurities cease to gather, they dry up and Nature soon gives the skin the bloom of youth and health.

If you would have a beautiful complexion, please stop using cosmetics. Can you not realize how they plaster up the pores? Were you to cover your entire body with such a mask, you would die in a day or two.

Stuart's Calcium Wafers are very pleasant to the taste, are put up in convenient form to carry, and can be obtained at any drug store, at 50 cents a box.

Make your dreams of a lovely complexion come true. In a short time a very bad complexion is transformed to perfect loveliness.

Ladies' Dressing Sacque FREE

This dainty sacque made of good quality flannelette with charming flower and panel design, circular ripple, Bishop sleeves, Peplum [illegible], Pearl buttons, yoke and sleeves piped [illegible] satin, *FREE* for selling only 20 of our famous

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$150.00 Per Month and expenses made by all our active men selling our popular line of clothing. No experience necessary—no capital required—no commission plan—no house to house canvass. You regulate your profits to suit yourself. This is high grade employment at high wages.

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Our Plan:—We ship by prepaid express big outfit of cloth samples, lithograph fashion plates, tape measure, order blanks, advertising matter, everything free. We operate the largest mills in the U.S. and sell goods cheaper than any other house in the world. Finest tailored, all wool suits, $7.50 up. No difficulty getting orders at these prices. Everything guaranteed. Don't buy a suit or overcoat anywhere at any price until you see our amazing offer and biggest, lowest priced clothing line in U.S.

THE OLD WOOLEN MILLS CO. Adams and Market Sts. Department 101 CHICAGO

Heard in a Street Car.

She—"Pardon me, sir, for walking on your feet."

He—"Oh, don't mention it. I walk on them myself, you know"

Quite So.

"It's a good plan to be prepared for the worst," remarked the Wise Guy.

"And you'll generally get it," added the Simple Mug

WHEN WOMEN VOTE.

A Family Skeleton.

Hatcher—"Isn't Jones' wife thin and skinny?"

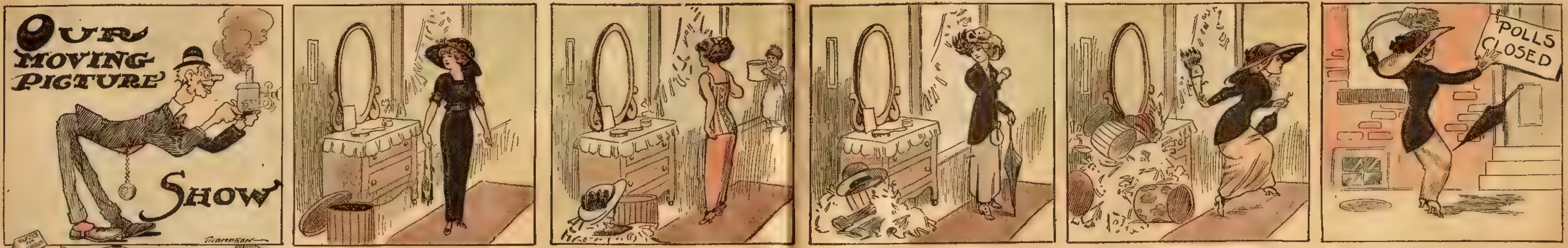
Scratcher—"She's the only family skeleton he can't keep in the closet."

Paid for Fighting.

"He is always fighting other men's battles."

"There's no money in that."

"There is for him. He's a lawyer."



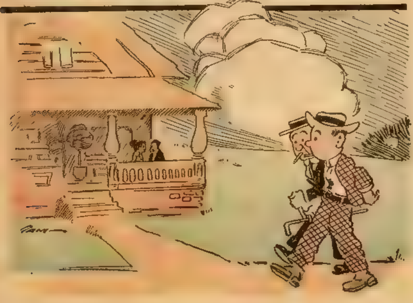
"Dear me! I can't go to vote in this costume'

"Help me, quickly, Marie; I shall be late'

"This will do, only it's so girlish

'Oh, dear! I must hurry—I've only got ten minutes left'

"Horrors!—The polls have closed! Help! I'm going to faint."



Harold—I've taken the first steps in wooing Alice.
Vance—Poor boy! Wallie has taken the whole front porch.

An Author's Hard Luck.

"By golly, I call this rubbing it in," declared a Pittsburgh poet.

"How now?"

"I sent this magazine two poems and they sent me back three."

Compensation.

Marks—"My wife says yours cannot keep a secret"

Parks—"I know it, but she can keep a cook!"

The Kind.

"There is one class of business men who always take the pledge and generally keep it.

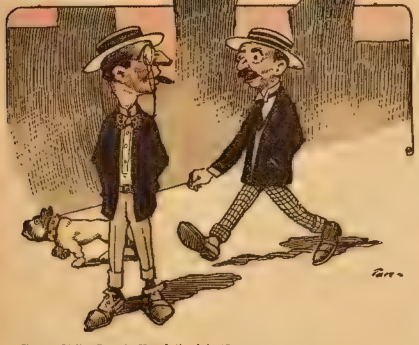
"Who are they?"

"Pawnbrokers"

The Obliging Jeweler.

"I'd like to look at some engagement rings, please."

"Certainly, sir. How many would you wish?"



Jigson—Hello, Jones! Heard the latest?
Jagson—Nope; hurry up.
Jigson—I dreamed last night my watch was gone.
Jagson—Well, was it?
Jigson—No, 'twas going.

MY FINANCIAL WASH.

The Government has installed machines for laundering the paper money. —News Item

I haven't got much filthy cash,
A lone two-dollar bill,
But I shall send it to the wash
And put it through the mill

I'll take my washing every week
And give it to the clerk
For I have got a scheme unique
And hope to see it work

The fellow who removes the grime,
Who renovates and cleans,
He may mislay my wash some time,
And give me Hetty Green's

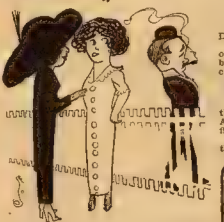
His Limit.

"Bobby, did you have a good time at the party?"

'Yes, mother '

"Why, didn't you stay until it was over?"

"What was the use, mother? I couldn't eat any more."



Mrs. Hoyle—"I hear that your husband won a hat in the picnic free for all race."

Mrs. Doyle—"Yes, but it does him no good"

Mrs. Hoyle—"How is that?"

Mrs. Doyle—"His head got so big over winning that the hat won't fit."

Nothing to Fear.

"George, dear," said the girl, "do you ever drink anything?"

"Yes, occasionally, George reluctantly admitted.

"But, dear," she went on, anxiously, "what do you suppose papa would say if he should discover that the future husband of his daughter drank?'

"He discovered it this morning?"

"Oh, George! and what did he say?"

"He said, 'Well, George, my boy, I don't care if I do.'"

Why He Is Idle.

A cook has been going around a station in the south of India with the following "character," and is somewhat surprised he is not engaged.

"Abdul has been my cook for three months, it seems much longer. He leaves on account of ill health—my ill health"

A Logical Inference.

"John, dear, why do you call some women Amazons?"

"Well, my dear, you remember our geographies said the Amazon has the largest mouth

"I wonder why she went out and slammed the door like that?'

Settled Long Ago.

"Now, my dear," said young Mr. Sunboy when he had signed the lease for the pretty little flat, "the first thing we shall have to decide is which of us is to be in supreme command here."

"Oh, no, George, you are mistaken," she sweetly replied "I decided that while our friends were still throwing old shoes at us."

Departed Hair.

"A lock of Napoleon's hair recently sold for fifty dollars at auction. Pretty high for a lock of hair, eh?"

"Oh, I don't know," responded the baldheaded man. "I think I'd be willing to pay at that rate for my own hair, if I could get it back."

Too Agreeable.

"Why is she so angry with him?"

"Because he agreed with her."

"You mean disagreed."

"I mean what I said. She remarked that of course she was not perfect, and he agreed with her."

A Modern Miracle.

"Do you believe in miracles?" asked Dobkins.

"You bet I do," said Snobkins. "Why only the other day my wife bought me a box of cigars, and by George, Dobky, I could smoke 'em!"

How He Got It.

Visitor—"So you were acquainted with the great financier who was raised here? As usual, I suppose, you gave him the first dollar he ever earned."

Native—"No; he took away from me the first dollar I ever earned."

Candid.

"What are your ideas about reform?'

"About the same as everybody's," replied Senator Sorghum. "I have a general impression that myself and my personal and political friends are the only people who do not need it"

New Game.

A returned explorer was giving a parlor lecture

"What is the gentleman talking about?" demanded a languid lady.

"Progressive Peru."

"And how do you play it?"

Sensible.

"Yonder is an early robin. See his red breast?'

"Yes; and it gave me quite a start at first. For a moment I thought the intelligent bird was wearing a chest protector."

Twentieth Century Religion.

Deacon De Goode—"Why don't you go to church, neighbor?"

Neighbor—"No time Churches are too slow for this age. They don't fit into our twentieth century mile-a-minute civilization, no-siree"

"Um—Well, what would you suggest instead?"

"Can't say exactly, but it ought to be some sort of a put-a-nickel-in-the-slot-and-save-your-soul machine

Easily Proved.

Lady (to small boy who is fishing)—"I wonder what your father would say if he caught you fishing on Sunday"

Boy—"I don't know. You had better ask him. That's him a little farther up the stream"

One Idea of Them.

"What are these society people we hear about?" asked Mr. Corntossel

"I dunno," replied the farmer, "but as near as I can make out they're jes' folks that make a regular habit o' wearin' their Sunday clothes every day

Nothing Vulgar for Her.

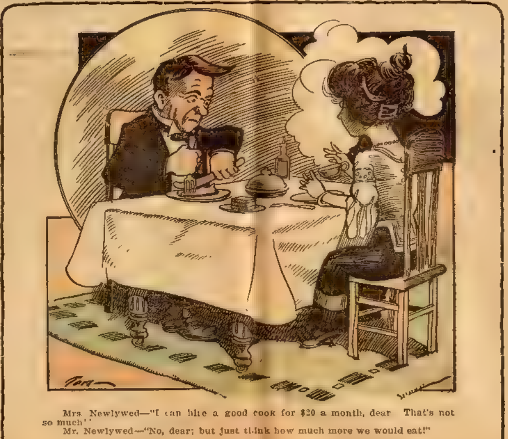
Mrs. Nuritch—"I think I'll take the bracelet. You are sure it is made of refined gold?"

Jeweler—"Yes, madam."

Mrs Nuritch—"Because I do detest anything that isn't refined '

His Pull.

"Let them think I am without friends," gritted Samson, through his clenched teeth. "I'll show them that I have some pull left!" Therewith and immediately the temple tumbled.



Mrs Newlywed—"I can hire a good cook for $20 a month, dear That's not so much''

Mr. Newlywed—"No, dear; but just think how much more we would eat!"

Feminine Alternative.

"Pop?"

"Well, son?'

"Are cities feminine?"

"They are generally referred to as being of the feminine gender Why do you ask?"

'I was just thinking that there are still hopes for Skowhegan, Painted Post, Skaneateles and a few others to change their names if they don't like them

The Genuine Article.

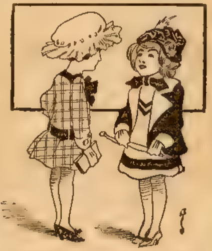
Lady—"Are you sure this is genuine English breakfast tea?'

Talented Clerk—"Well, madam, I had some of that tea at supper last evening, and I dreamed all night that I was falling off of London Bridge."

Playing Both Ends.

He—"So you won the breach of promise suit. Did you get the whole $10,000?"

She—"Every penny of it. I married my lawyer.'



Bessie—"Do you say your prayers every night?"

Jessie—"I did; but I have got a new dress and a doll baby coach, and everything I want just now."

Worse and Worse.

Minks—"My wife no sooner reaches Florida before the doctor there orders her North, and as quick as she gets home, our doctor here orders her back to Florida"

Jinks—"H'm! I see how it is. The railroad combine has consolidated with the doctors' trust."

No Harm Done.

Chappie—"I'd just like to know what you mean by being engaged to both Cholly and me at once."

Miss Pinkie—"Why, bless me! there is no harm done; you can't either of you afford to marry me, you know."

Inspiration.

"Some authors say they dream the plots of their stories."

"Yes, I can always tell when Penwiggle is at work on one of his mystery terrors by the way he eats Welsh rabbit and mince pie."

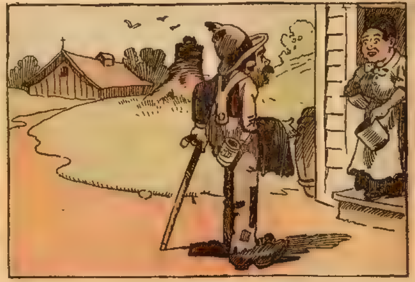
Name to Fit.

"What did you call that chap?"

"Parsley."

"But that isn't his name?"

"I know it; I just dubbed him that because he is always in the soup."



Kind Lady—Will you split some kindling in return for a good dinner?
Weary Willie—Impossible, madam. Yeh see, I belongs ter de International and Amalgamated Order of Hobos and der shall never be a split among our ranks if I kin help it

Typical Fire Escapes.

Guest—"What precautions have you here in case of fire?"

Hotel Clerk—"We have fire escapes from every floor. All you have to do is to make your way to one of them and fall off"

A Misunderstanding.

Patient—"I've got stomach trouble."
Doctor—"Why don't you diet?"
Patient—"What color?"

Think They'll Learn.

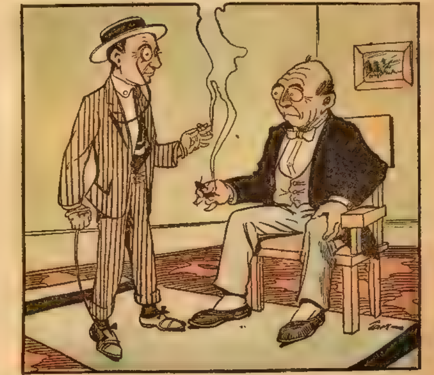
He—"You know one-half the world doesn't know what the other half is doing."

She—"I know it. That's the reason we women want to vote."

Sympathetic Touch.

Visitor—"Your daughter, er—doesn't seem quite sure which note to strike."

Mrs. Bluffem—"Oh, my, no. She plays with a great deal of feeling."



Old Jones—"Can you give my daughter the luxuries to which she has been accustomed?"

Cholly (engaged)—"Not much longer. That's why I want to get married.'

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IN THE TOILS.

THERE certainly were flaws somewhere in the screens. As Mrs. Stebleton waved distractedly at the buzzing pests that were interfering with the reading of her morning mail she calculated that there must be at least a thousand flies in the flat. And Mrs. Stebleton hates flies as she hates a rattlesnake.

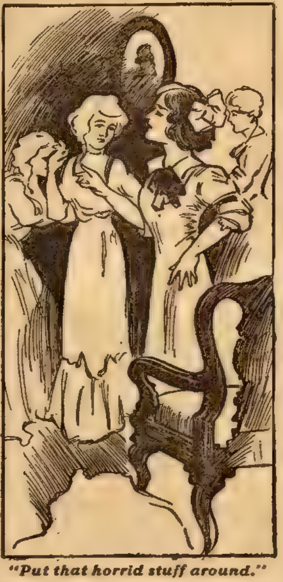
"I simply cannot stand this!" she cried in wrath. So she went to the phone and ordered sent over at once a quantity of sticky fly paper. When it came she hated to spoil the looks of the place, but desperate measures were imperative. The yellow sheets were scattered about through the rooms. Then Mrs. Stebleton hung around counting the first unwary victims and rejoicing as she checked them off.

Presently she got dressed and went out to a luncheon and shopping with a friend. When she came back she hoped that the last of the invaders would have buzzed out his final protests on the sticky paper.

Hilda, the maid, some hours later bore an armful of freshly ironed sheets and towels as she tramped heavily down the hall to the linen closet. Then she dropped her burden with a thump on a convenient table. When in the course of putting them away she came to the last sheet something seemed wrong with it. Hilda investigated and then she said: "My land!" One of the pieces of fly paper was immovably glued to the under side of the sheet.

With mutterings of disgust Hilda peeled off the sheet and tried to wash it out in the bathtub. Her efforts proved to her how very useless it was for a fly to try to get away when once he got stuck in the sticky stuff. The fly paper she removed from its dangerous position on the table, and after aimlessly looking around for an out of the way place deposited it upon the topmost sofa pillow on the library couch.

Linda Stebleton, aged 16, arrived home from school a little later, bringing with her three girls. They burst in with a gust of chatter and distributed themselves through two rooms recklessly. Thereupon simultaneously arose wild shrieks. Guest No. 1 had planted her elbow on one sheet of fly paper and her endeavors to remove it glued it firmly to her other hand. Guest No. 2 had leaned back her head and brought down a sheet hanging over the edge of a bookcase. Four puffs seemed inextricably attached to its surface. Guest No. 3 was trying to remove a sheet from Linda's back.



"Put that horrid stuff around."

After the excitement had cooled down a trifle Linda gazed upon the fly paper with hostile eyes. "Mother must have put that horrid stuff around!" she said. "I suppose she saw a fly! You'd think that one fly was a regiment from the way she acts. Now, where can we put the awful stuff?"

They prowled around with the sticky paper gingerly held between their thumbs and fingers and finally arranged it to suit themselves. Then they devoted an hour to soap and alcohol in an endeavor to rid themselves of the general stickiness.

"Tod" Stebleton, aged 8, joined the procession when he rushed in and sat down with a bounce on a sheet that had slid into a chair. His objections were violent and acrid and it took the efforts of his sister and the other three girls combined to calm him. Taking the fly paper in no gentle hand, Tod hurled it out of his way.

Stebleton himself arrived home before his wife. "What's this? What's this?" he demanded in his nervous way, placing an investigating finger on the pale yellow sheet on the hall stand. It stuck. The other hand stuck, too, when he hastily endeavored to get it off. His son and daughter hastened to his rescue, explaining that doubtless mother had been waging war against her enemies, the flies.

When Mrs. Stebleton came in, tired, she was full of apologies for her lateness, she explained as she tossed off her hat and her gloves and coat. "I'm simply dead!" she ended. "I've just got to rest a few minutes before I dress for dinner!" Then she threw herself among the pillows on the library couch.

But not for long. From Mrs. Stebleton's appearance as she scrambled to her feet wildly after a horrified instant it seemed that Linda and her three friends, Tod and Stebleton all had followed Hilda's example in choosing the sofa pillows on that couch as a safe place to stow the sticky sheets of fly paper out of the way. Every last one of them was plastered on Mrs. Stebleton!

* * *

A Vital Issue.

At the meeting of the Illinois Bar Association at the Hotel La Salle in Chicago, Judge Theodore Brentano of the Superior Court told of a case tried before him several years ago at which the late Jim Evans, a widely known newspaper writer, was a witness. Evans had given important evidence and the opposing attorney was doing his best to shake his testimony.

He had made Evans go back over his past life and was questioning him regarding the different positions he had held. Jim was telling of a period of his early newspaper days when he had held many places and none for long.

"Then where did you go?" thundered the lawyer after Evans had told of working a few days in the Southwest.

"To Dallas, Texas. Worked two weeks," replied Evans.

"Why did you change?" asked the lawyer.

"My boss and I could not agree upon a question of national policy," was the answer.

"Then where did you go?"

"To New Orleans. Left there in a week."

"And what was the reason this time?" from the attorney.

"Same thing," answered Evans, with a smile. "The proprietor and I found that we did not agree upon a political question of national importance."

The same answer was given as Evans told of numerous other places he had taken and given up. The attorney finally gave up his attempt to break down Evans with the remark: "You must be a hard man to get along with if you have such set political ideas."

A few days after the case had been decided, Judge Brentano met Evans on the street.

"Say, Jim," he asked, "what was that question of national importance that cost you so many jobs? What did you and you bosses disagree over?"

"Prohibition," answered Evans, with a smile.

* * *

Too Hearty a Diet.

A young Englishman came to Washington and devoted his days and nights to an earnest endeavor to drink all the Scotch whisky there was. He couldn't do it, and presently he went to a doctor, complaining of a disordered stomach.

"Quit drinking!" ordered the doctor.

"But, my dear sir, I cawn't. I get so thirsty."

"Well," said the doctor, "whenever you are thirsty eat an apple instead of taking a drink."

The Englishman paid his fee and left. He met a friend to whom he told his experience.

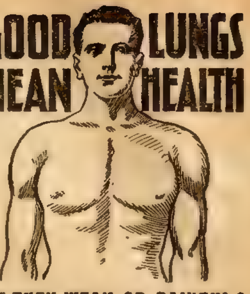
"Bally rot!" he protested. "Fawncy eating forty apples a day!"

* * *

A True Diplomat.

The mayor of a French town had, in accordance with the regulations, to make out a passport for a rich and highly respectable lady of his acquaintance, who, in spite of a slight disfigurement, was very vain of her personal appearance. His native politeness prompted him to gloss over the defect, and, after a moment's reflection he wrote among the items of personal description: "Eyes dark, beautiful, tender, expressive, but one of them is missing."

GOOD LUNGS MEAN HEALTH



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The Birthday Present.

"You look tired," said Mrs. Pulstrum to her neighbor.

"I am tired," admitted Mrs. Firmar. "This thing of selecting birthday presents for a husband may be a labor ot love, but it is working just the same."

"Oh, tell me what you got! Mr. Pulstrum will have a birthday next month."

"Well, all I wish for you is that he is not such a provokingly disappointing man as Mr. Firmar is."

"Provokingly disappointing? Why, I always considered Mr. Firmar one of the nicest of men!"

"So he is. That's the reason I married him. But let me tell you my experience trying to buy him a few birthday presents. First, I went to the shoe store where we trade and asked to see some slippers——"

"Slippers are a good present."

"That's what I thought. But I was disappointed when the clerk brought me a pair of tan slippers and told me that my husband had been in yesterday and had picked them out and told him that I would probably be in to buy some for his birthday, and to see that I got those."

"Why, the idea!"

"Yes, and when I went to the haberdasher's where I am in the habit of getting his ties and shirts and socks and things and asked to see some of those fuzzy hats the clerk brought out one which he said my husband had selected yesterday on the chance that I might drop in to get him one for his birthday."

"Well, isn't that a shame?"

"I thought so; but I asked to look at some ties and was shown a dozen that my husband had selected in case I wanted to buy ties for him. And when I turned to go out the salesman asked me if I would not like to look at the shirts my husband had selected."

"Well, of all things!"

"Then I went to the jeweler's and asked to see a ring suitable for a gentleman; and I was shown one which my husband had expressed a preference for yesterday. So I decided not to get a ring, and I asked the salesman to let me see a fountain pen, and he told me that my husband had selected one with an arrangement for holding it in his pocket. He left word that I was to be shown that one if I looked at fountain pens. So I said to show me a clip for holding a gentleman's tie in place. I was shown one and told that my husband had selected it and left orders that in case I bought it to have his monogram engraved on it. So I put it down and asked to look at some pins, only to learn that my husband had expressed a preference for opals and had selected a very pretty one."

"That must have been very annoying."

"It was. When I left the jeweler's I was awfully annoyed. I stood in the door for a moment, almost angry enough to turn and go straight home."

"But of course, you had to get something for your husband."

"Of course. So I went to the bookstore and was shown several sets of books he had chosen on the possibility that I would want to buy books for his present!"

"It yas stupid of the salesman to tell you."

"Why, my husband had instructed them to tell me! Didn't I say he was provokingly disappointing?"

"I would not have spent a penny on him!"

"I thought for a little while that I wouldn't; but we're pretty good chums and I decided to get him a nice present and at the same time teach him a lesson. The present I selected will cost him $50, but I think he will admire it."

"Is it something he had not thought to order?"

"Indeed it is."

"Good! What is it?"

"A nice, new gown."

"Oo-oh! I wish my husband would give me an excuse like that!"

* * *

Cheerful Mike.

Two Irishmen occupied the same house, one of them living on the first floor and the other upstairs. Late one evening Tim hearing a commotion in the hall went out to see what the trouble was. He found his friend had fallen downstairs. "Did ye fall down, Michael?" he asked.

"I did," said Mike. "I fell down, but I was comin' down anyway."

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Practically every important 1913 announcement has been made. A careful examination of these announcements will prove precisely what we have been claiming—that there is not a $1,200 car built that has any more practical value to offer than this one for $985.

And here are the comparative facts which support this seemingly bold statement.

Automobile values must be looked at from several different angles. You must consider not only the price, but what that price buys you. You must take into consideration the power, the strength, the beauty, the construction, the size, the appearance and the equipment of the car. You must judge a car by the material in it; the workmanship on it; the methods employed to produce it; and last but not least, the facilities behind the production methods.

Examine each one of these fundamentals in this Overland at $985 and you will find a car that it identical with any $1,200 car in the world. Go further and you find high-grade construction and painstaking care in finish that equal the production methods employed in the making of any $5,000 car you know of.

This car has the power of a $1,200 car; it has the strength of a $1,200 car; it has the size of $1,200 car; it has the seating capacity of a $1,200 car; it has the wheel base of a $1,200 car; it has the chassis construction of a $1,200 car; it has the comfort of a $1,200 car; it has the beauty and finish of a $1,200 car.

Take the equipment item alone. It has a Warner speedometer—the best made; it has a fine mohair top and boot; it has a clear vision wind shield; it has a self-starter and Prestolite tank—every practical accessory made for an automobile. And all for the one price—$985. There are no "extras."

Then there are those important construction features which are only found on the very high-priced cars. This model has a drop-forged I beam section front axle, fitted with the famous Timken bearings; a three-quarter floating rear axle fitted with Hyatt bearings; a selective transmission, with three speeds forward and reverse, fitted with annular bearings, and a cold rolled pressed steel frame. It has the center control. The brakes are unusually large for a car of this size and power, and are ample for cars of much greater weight. There are two powerful sets of the drum type, internal expanding and external contracting. The great braking surface of these is indicated by their dimensions, 13 inches by 2¼ inches each. These are the brake dimensions you find on $1,509 cars. Pick up the catalogue of any $1,500 car and see for yourself. The springs are semi-elliptic front, three-quarter elliptic rear. Each spring has six leaves. Tires are 32x3½ Q. D.

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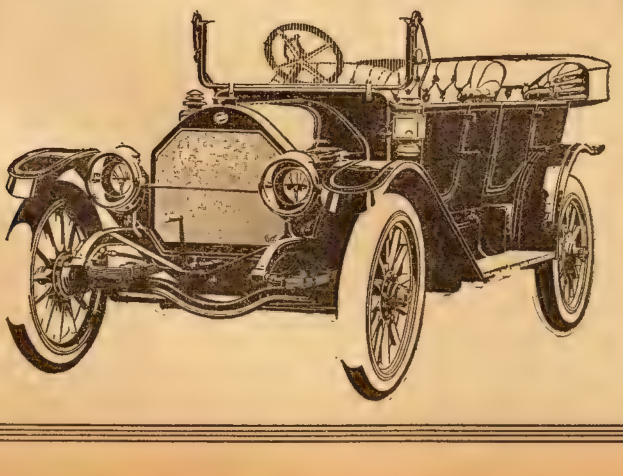

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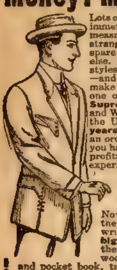

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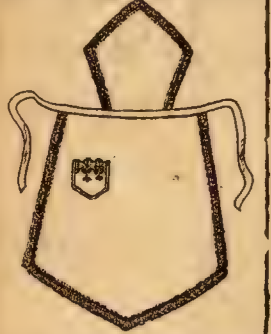

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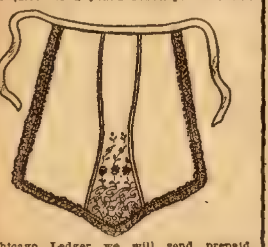

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ANECDOTES OF PEOPLE

Mose and the Law.

Bozeman Bulger, a baseball writer, says that in his home town, down in southern Alabama, a darky was arraigned in court to answer a charge of murder.

"Mose Tupper," said the Judge, contemplating the prisoner over his spectacles, "you are accused here of one of the most serious crimes known to our laws—to-wit, the taking of a human life. Are you properly represented by counsel.

"No suh," said the darky cheerfully.

"Well, have you talked to any one about your defense since your arrest?"

"I told the sheriff about the shootin' when he come to my cabin to fetch me heah," said the prisoner—"but tha's all."

"And have you taken no steps whatever to engage a lawyer?"

"No, suh," said Mose. "I ain't got no money to be wastin' on lawyers. Dey tell me lawyers is mighty costive."

"If you have no funds," insisted the Judge, "it lies within the power of the Court to appoint an attorney to defend you without charge."

"You needn't be botherin' yo'self, Jedge," answered Mose.

"Well, what do you propose to do about this case?" demanded His Honor.

"Jedge," said the negro, "ez fur ez Ise concerned you kin jes' let de matter drap!"

Art and Architecture.

John Sloan, the well-known artist of New York, takes the same intelligent interest in architecture as in painting.

A New York architect, aware of Mr. Sloan's excellent taste, took him in his motor car to see a huge and costly country house that he had erected for a millionaire on a bluff overlooking the Hudson.

As the architect stood with Mr. Sloan on the terrace of the new property, he looked up at the mansion's showy facade and said thoughtfully:

"Stupendous! But I haven't decided yet what kind of creeper to have in front."

"The Virginia creeper" said Mr. Sloan, "would cover it up quickest."—Life.

Brief Yarns.

Two Germans were walking one cold day on the banks of a large pond, when one of them fell in. He could not swim and screamed for aid. The other, who was an officer, did not feel inclined to take so cold a plunge, and calmly watched the struggles of the sinking man. All at once the man in the water began to sing a verse of the "Marseillaise," and the officer jumped in forthwith, for his strict orders were to arrest any person whom he heard sing that famous song. The unfortunate citizen was imprisoned for eight months, but that was better than drowning.

"Some years ago, when South, I met an old colored man who claimed to have known George Washington," says ex-Governor Bunn of Pennsylvania. "I asked him whether he was in the boat when George Washington crossed the Delaware, and he instantly replied: 'Lor, massa, I steered dat boat.' 'Well,' said I, 'do you remember when George took the hack at the cherry tree?' He looked worried a minute, and then, with a beautiful smile, said: 'Why, suah, massa; I dun drove dat hack myself.'"

Stage An Exception.

Cyril Scott tells of a dinner he once attended at which Edwin Booth was the guest of honor. Mr. Booth was called on for a speech.

"What shall I speak of?" he asked. He was a quiet man and hated speechmaking.

"Oh, just tell us about the stage; something about the theater," some one said.

Booth laughed. "If you want to know about the sea," he said, "ask a sailor. If you want to know about finance, ask a banker. But if you want to know anything about the stage, ask the barber or the hotel clerk—any one except an actor."

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The Precious Metal.

Charley Van Loan, the writer of baseball stories, knows a frugal German who runs a delicatessen store in the Flatbush district of Brooklyn, where Van Loan lives. One evening Van Loan dropped in to buy a Camembert cheese and found the proprietor absorbed in a deep study.

"What's ailing you?" inquired Van Loan.

"Vell," said the German, "I got a frient named Felix vot has sent me an invitation to his golden vedding, and now I haf got to send him a bresent. Und I hate it—gold is so exbensive!"

"Must it be something in gold?" asked Charley Van Loan.

"Sure!" said the German. "Ain't it a golden vedding?"

Van Loan went away, leaving the German still thinking hard. The next night, when he passed the store again, the delicatessen man was smiling broadly.

"I fixed it," he said; "und it didn't gost so much neither."

"Did you send him something that was gold?" asked Van Loan.

"Sure—for forty cents!"

"What could you get that was gold for forty cents?" inquired Van Loan.

"A glass globe, mit zwei goldfish in it!"

The Dishonest Scot.

A Scotchman and an Irishman applied to the captain of a ship for work. He hired both, but asked the Irishman for references and let the Scot go on without any.

This, of course, angered Tim, who vowed he would get even. They were both washing off the deck one day when the Scotchman, leaning too far over the rail lost his bucket. He was about to recover it when a huge wave came and pulled him overboard.

Tim rushed over to the side of the ship, saw the Scot had disappeared; then he approached the captain and said:

"Do yez remimber whin I shipped aboard this vessel, yez asked me fer referince and let the Scotchman come on without thim?"

"Yes, I remember," returned the captain.

"Well, yez are no judge of character. Ye've been deceaved," said Tim. "He's gone off wid yer pail."

A Better Job.

The proprietor of a Turkish-bath establishment in Milwaukee was much taken by the physical perfections of a young man he saw in a butcher's shop. After a minute survey of the huge muscles of the young man, the Turkish-bath proprietor offered him a position as rubber in his establishment.

"I'll give you more than you're getting here," said he. "What does this man pay you?"

"Ten dollars a week and my week's meat," said the butcher employee.

"What is the meat worth?"

"About four dollars."

The Turkish-bath man did some rapid figuring.

"Look here," said he finally, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give you ten dollars and five dollars' worth of baths weekly. That'll be a dollar more than you get from the butcher."

Tit for Tat.

While president of the Lake Shore Railroad the late John Newell was so opposed to granting passes that he frequently refused to issue them to railroad officials, and when he did he limited such transportation to certain trains. On one occasion he prepared a parcel of exchange passes and sent them out as usual. Across the end of the one he forwarded to President Caldwell was printed in red ink the words, "Not good on limited or fast trains." Without exasperating delay President Caldwell's annual pass for the Nickel Plate to President Newell arrived. Across the face, in the bold handwriting of President Caldwell, were the words, in red ink, "Not good on passenger trains."—Life.

Three Were No Crowd.

According to an English actor, this happened in a small theater in a small town in provincial England, where a troupe of barnstormers was playing to meager audiences.

The villain dragged the shrinking heroine down the stage to the footlights and in her ear he hissed:

"Are we alone?"

"No, gov-nor," interrupted the lone occupant of the gallery—"not tonight you ain't; but you will be tomorrow night!"

Full of Them.

"I spent my vacation in beautiful Wiscasset," said Jerome S. McWade, the Duluth capitalist. "Wiscasset, you know, is famous for having organized the immortal phrase, 'The woods is full of 'em.'

"This is the story:

"A very deaf old man was shooting squirrels down Wiscasset way. A stranger happened along and said:

"'Old man, which is the road to Wiscasset?'

"The deaf old fellow, failing to understand, answered:

"'That's one—that's a squirrel—settin' up thar on that tree! See him?'

"'I didn't ask you about the squirrels,' said the stranger, impatiently. 'I asked you, durn it all, which was the road to Wiscasset?'

"'Yep,' said the deaf old huntsman, excitedly. 'Yep, thar's another, too, just a-peekin' outen that knothole.'

"Then the stranger, losing his patience, roared:

"'You're a fool!'

"'Yep, the woods is full of 'em,' said the old man, complacently."

An Artful Dodger.

"Papa," said Georgie, "it worries me awful to think how much trouble I give mamma."

"She hasn't complained."

"No, she's very patient. But she often sends me to the shops for things and they are a good ways off and I know she gets cross waiting when she's in such a dreadful hurry."

"Not often, I fancy."

"Oh, she's nearly always in a hurry. She gets everything all ready for baking and finds at the last minute she hasn't any yeast, or she gets a pudding all mixed and finds she hasn't any nutmeg or something; and then she's in an awful stew, 'cause the oven is all ready and maybe visitors are coming, and I can't run a very long distance, you know; and I feel awful sorry for poor mamma."

"Humph! Well, what can you do about it?"

"I was thinking you might get me a bicycle."

Johnnie's Golden Text.

A union Sunday School service was held in a St. Louis church a few months ago, and the superintendent had thought that in order to make the service more impressive it would be a good plan to have six-year-old Johnnie go to the rostrum and repeat the golden text of the morning. This Johnnie consented to do. The golden text was, "I am the bread of life."

When it came time for Johnnie's part of the programme he arose from his seat with calm assurance and walked boldly down the aisle to the rostrum. Once upon the rostrum, with the sea of faces confronting him, Johnnie's calm assurance suddenly left him. Things looked entirely different from the platform. He hesitated, standing first on one foot and then on the other. Finally in a shaking voice he shouted:

"I am—a loaf—of bread."—Life.

The Unsocial Socialist.

At Arden, the single-tax colony near Philadelphia, they tell a story about Upton Sinclair.

Mr. Sinclair was having a good deal of trouble, both domestic and political, at Arden, and at the height of this trouble he took the train one day for Philadelphia.

A group of jovial drummers sat near him in the smoking-car. One of them, nodding in his direction, said to a friend:

"Who is that silent, grim, frowning chap over there? He looks as though he loathed all mankind. Who is he? I never saw anybody so unsocial."

"Him? Oh, he's a Socialist," was the reply.

Time for Patriotism.

The organist was not lacking in patriotism, yet he rebelled when required to play "The Star Spangled Banner" at a wedding.

"It is not appropriate," said he.

"Ain't it?" said the bride's father. "For this wedding it is the most appropriate thing you can play. Cut all the rest of the programme if you like, but stick to that. I had the hardest kind of a fight to keep Belle's mother from marrying her off to a foreigner. Between Belle and me we won out for an American, and if this isn't the time for 'The Star Spangled Banner' I'd like to know what is."

Murphy's Libation.

Charles F. Murphy, leader of Tammany Hall, sat in a Baltimore hotel restaurant. A waiter, carrying a dish on which there had been a slab of roast beef and some gravy, held the dish at such an angle that most of the gravy remaining dripped on Murphy's coat.

Murphy looked at the waiter inquiringly.

"There now," soothed the waiter as he dabbed at the gravy with a towel—"that's all right. Be a good sport and I'll get you some more gravy for nothing."

Mrs. Wolfingugenthaler's Ghost

By Augustin W. Breeden

MRS. WOLFINGUgenthaler, or Mrs. "Gug," as the boarders at her near-fashionable boarding house, the "Villa," called her for short, was fair, fat, fluffy, and forty-five. Good-natured and innocent as a child, Mrs. "Gug" was yet a woman with a past, and that one of the weirdest and most incomprehensible of pasts. For several years she had never lived in a house, put sooner or later that house got the reputation of being haunted. Of recent years this haunt had dogged her so closely that all the rental agencies had got her on their blacklists; and it was with the greatest difficulty that she had managed to lease the "Villa," a grand old mansion, built by a wildcat railroad king of the early seventies and since degenerated into a boarding house. This ghost was none of your ordinary sort, of thin, misty whiteness and stately bearing, but was what might be called a musical ghost. Never seen by any one, it might easily be heard by every one, the unfortunate Mrs. Wolfingugenthaler, alone excepted.

It was about two months after Mrs. "Gug" had taken the Villa that I was called in to investigate this strange case, and I learned the above facts, not all in a lump as I have set them down, but bit by bit, after the manner of a private detective. I am a private detective and work for the Chase & Chase agency of Chicago. This was my first case, and came near curing me right at the start of all my Sherlockian ambitions. The first day I was on the job, my client and I had a long interview in the ornate, high-ceiled parlor of the Villa. The gist of this interview was that some sort of queer noise seemed to be annoying her boarders at night, to such an extent that more than half of the original bunch had quit, and that she was compelled to keep an ad running constantly in the paper in order to keep her house filled. She had therefore sent for me and requested that I investigate the matter.

"Very well, Mrs. Wolfingugenthaler," I said, referring to her card; "suppose I take a room with you and sit up and see if it, uh, performs tonight."

She agreed to this plan; and, fortifying myself with a long afternoon nap and a brace of Coca-colas, I came back on the job at supper time. I was introduced to the other boarders as an architect who had heard of the wonderful architectural beauties of the Villa, and so had come there to board a while and study it; this sort of introduction would, I calculated, give me an opportunity to go nosing about the old house without arousing too much curiosity.

At the supper table I stated jokingly that I understood the old Villa was haunted by a musical ghost; and thereupon half the boarders present began to give me all sorts of information on the subject. One man said that the noise sounded part of the time like a phonograph about to run down and a part of the time like a grand opera singer with a slight cold letting her foot slip on the ledger line above. A young lady, who I thought looked a little nervous as if from loss of sleep, attested that it was the most blood-curdling sound she had ever heard, and that it made her think of the screams and death-gurgle of some poor victim being murdered in cold blood. No two could agree as to just what the sound was like or where it seemed to come from, most of them declaring that it seemed to come from everywhere.

I went up to my room early that night and before bedtime my neighbor of the next room dropped in casually to discuss the ghost still further. He prophesied that in spite of the excellent table fare and the architectural beauties of the Villa, I would soon get enough of it. According to his statement the house usually became quiet about eleven o'clock and the ghost started up its performance about a half hour later.

How long did it continue?

He did not know; as no one had ever heard it stop, but had rather fallen asleep toward dawn with it still caterwauling.

"How does it go, really?" I asked. "Give me some idea of it."

"Wait and hear it for yourself," was his reply; "no description can do it justice."

"What are your theories about it?"

"Haven't any. Some say it's the ghost of old Professor Hermann Wolfingugenthaler. They say he died of a broken heart because he couldn't get a manager to bring out a grand opera he'd made up and been carrying about for twenty years. I'd as soon believe it's the ghost of the opera as of the old Professor; that's what it sounds like."

Well, I waited, and sure enough, a little after eleven o'clock the ghost began to—well, to chant, I should say. The noise it made was altogether the strangest, weirdest, most improbable noise I ever heard.

"Hear it?" called my neighbor, triumphantly, through the thin partition between our rooms.

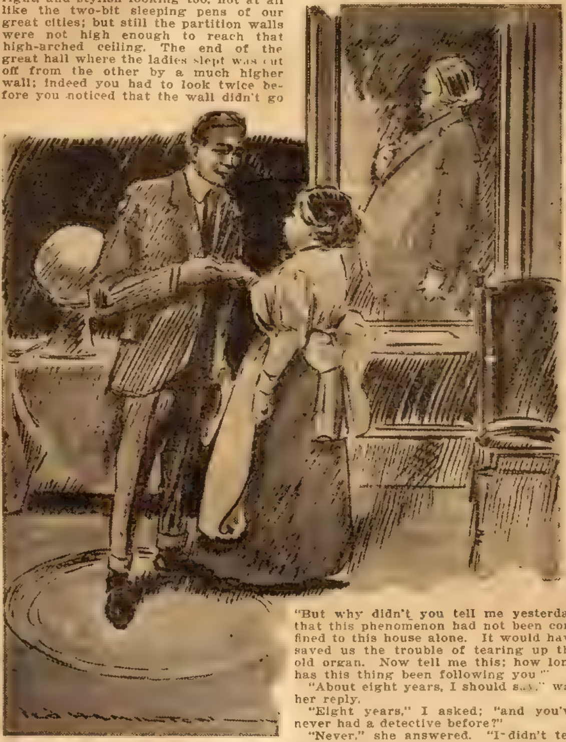
"I hear it!" I called back. "Be still; I want to locate it!"

"When you get it located," he answered sleepily; "let me know; I want a snapshot of it."

The sound continued: Thwee-a-at! Juggerty, juggerty! Boom — pshaw! Wow-oo! Pree-ee!

It sounded like a compromise between a college yell and a newly compounded chemical. In tone, pitch, timbre, and dynamics it was an absolutely original proposition. There were notes in it to put a Claxon behind the times, and overtones fit to make a concatenation of cats on the woodpile ashamed of their mediocrity.

Thwee-a-at! Juggerty, juggerty! The variations on the main theme were so interesting and altogether unexpected that I found myself speculating constantly on what would come next. It was with difficulty that I tore myself away from my curiosity enough to begging my duties as a detective and try to locate the sound. In the palmy days of the wildcat railroading the floor on which my room was located had been one vast, ornate, high-ceiled ballroom. It had in its humbler days been cut up into sleeping boxes, high-walled all right, and stylish looking too, not at all like the two-bit sleeping pens of our great cities; but still the partition walls were not high enough to reach that high-arched ceiling. The end of the great hall where the ladies slept was cut off from the other by a much higher wall; indeed you had to look twice before you noticed that the wall didn't go clear up to the ceiling. I reasoned that the noise might come from any one of those boxes on the men's side of that partition, and so I tiptoed along the hall and listened at each door, thinking that it was some ill-willed crank playing off a horrible trick on the rest of us. There didn't seem to be any more noise behind one of those doors than another; it simply seemed to come from everywhere at once. I maneuvered about until I was thoroughly weary and my teeth were chattering with the cold, and then I went to bed, leaving the ghost to tweet and juggerty to its heart's content.



"I was called in to investigate!"

Next morning, however, ransacking the house for some infernal machine that might be causing the noise, I discovered an old pipe-organ. About half of it had been torn away, and the other half had been walled up in a blind passage, open only at the top as every other room was on that floor. I was triumphant. I told myself that I had more brains than all those near-fashionable boarders combined. I had discovered the ghost the first night. Some one, for some reason or other, was going nightly to perform on this remnant of an organ.

I sent for a carpenter, and he and I soon demolished the remains of that old pipe-organ. If the noise ceased that night—and I was certain it would—the mystery would be at an end. I had been working hard for the last twenty-four hours, and I lay down early that night to sleep the sleep of the successful.

Thwee-a-at! Juggerty, juggerty! Boom—pshaw! Wow—oo, ree-ee!

I awoke in a moment. The noise was, if anything, more eerie, more insistent and devilish than the night before. As I listened, the thought took possession of me that perhaps it was after all the ghost of the old Professor. I could not throw off the thought, and after a while got so nervous that I called to my neighbor through the wall to know if he were awake.

"Sure, I am!" he answered. "Everybody is!"

I listened to that thing till well on toward daylight, and then sleep overcame me, and I got a little troubled rest.

The next morning I went to Mrs. "Gug."

"Tearing out the organ didn't do any good," I said. "The thing performed again last night as usual."

"Well," she answered, "I didn't much think tearing out the organ would help any; but you're the detective and you didn't ask my opinion. You see this thing has followed me in every flat and house I've lived in, and of course there weren't pipe-organs in all of them."

"Of course not," I answered, pettishly. "But why didn't you tell me yesterday that this phenomenon had not been confined to this house alone. It would have saved us the trouble of tearing up the old organ. Now tell me this; how long has this thing been following you?"

"About eight years, I should say," was her reply.

"Eight years," I asked; "and you've never had a detective before?"

"Never," she answered. "I didn't tell you so yesterday; but you see, I've never heard it myself, and I don't halfway believe in it. I suppose the boarders told you that."

"They said you said you'd never heard it," I replied.

"Well, I never have; and then another thing kept me from wanting to make a public matter of it. My two daughters used to think perhaps it was their poor papa's ghost come back—not that it ever bothered them much, any more than me. You see they were big, strong girls and usually danced every night till midnight—oh, good respectable crowds, of course—and when they'd come home, they'd come in giggling and talking till you couldn't hear it thunder, and then as soon as their heads hit the pillow they'd be fast asleep—the poor innocent doves—and of course they had mighty little time to lie awake listening for ghosts. It was only after one, Lavinia, got engaged and then got disengaged and had trouble with her fiance, that the poor dear got to hearing this thing of nights. And, as I say, I never have heard it myself; and that's the reason that I thought it was all hallucination."

"Madam," said I, "I have experienced a good many kinds of hallucinations one time and another, from table tippings to absinthean jimmicanes, and I do assure you that if this is all hallucination then it is a brand-new variety, and the worst

(Continued on page twenty-three.)

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Sworn to and subscribed before me this first day of Oct. 1912

E. E. Wootring

[SEAL.]

(My commission expires May 30, 1916)

Most Beautiful.

The day when the Princess Brigitta's prize was to be awarded little Cordula went to school with a sad heart. She had so much wanted to win that prize! Sibylla and France and Helene and all the other girls had been working on their bits of embroidery and fine stitching these many weeks, but poor little Cordula had been forced to cook the food and brush the rooms and keep the baby happy, because the good mother had been ill. The pretty piece of needlework that she had begun was lying with only a few dainty stitches in it, just as she had left it when the mother's strength had given out.

The beautiful Princess Brigitta was a fine needlewoman, and she had offered the prize of a goldpiece to the little girl who could present the best specimen of her own needlework. Now the day had come on which the work was to be exhibited and the prize awarded.

Each little girl brought forward her work when she was called and laid it on a small table beside the princess. When it was Cordula's turn there were tears in her blue eys as she told the reason of her empty hands.

"But, dear child," replied the princess, "you say that the mother is better. Have you had no time, then, for some little piece of sewing?"

"Indeed, I have not!" the little girl said, earnestly. "Now that mother is able to cook and sweep, I have had to mend stockings for the five brothers and the baby all the time I am not in school. Oh, they make so many holes in the stockings, dear Princess Brigitta."

"Ah, little one, run home and fetch one of those stockings you have lately mended," said the princess, and away pattered Cordula.

Once in her father's cottage a new difficulty arose. All the stockings that had been mended had been put on that same morning and not one pair was left. Then Cordula, in despair, turned to the baby. He had been dressed only a couple of hours; could one of his little stockings be spared? The mother drew it from the rosy foot, scanned it carefully and said:

"Take it, child. And if you tell her why the creases are there I am sure she will pardon them."

So the baby's stocking took its place among the dainty muslins and silks and linens, and when the prize was awarded it did not go to Sibylla for her hemstiching or to Helene for her silk embroidery. It went to Cordula, because the princess said that the stitches in the baby's stocking were the smallest and evenest of all, and the little darn was the most beautiful piece of needlework there.

* * *

New to Him.

"I see France has an association which gives loans on the word of honor of the people," said the man in the pawnbroker's shop.

"Vord of honor," said the proprietor of the house with the three gilt balls. "Vat is dat?"

Mrs. Wolfingugenthaler's Ghost

(Continued from page twenty-one.)

ever. You say that it has been annoying you about eight years?"

"Not me," she corrected, "other people. Yes, about eight years."

"And your husband has been dead?"

"Eight years last May," she replied. "You don't think it could be——"

"Certainly not," said I, trying my best not to look pale; "it is a mere coincidence and nothing more."

I went to my room that night with a determination to work out that case or know the reason. When the tweeting and juggering started up, I began once more to prowl about to try to locate its source; and I was soon on a hot trail. On the third floor, the one above the disfigured ballroom, or rather what had formerly been a gallery around it, I found a parrot sitting on his perch, and recognized him as one I had seen about the veranda. His back was turned to me, but I could see his body sway and thrill as each of the shriller sounds rang through the house. The lower ones he seemed to make with greater ease, for his body did not move at all with them. I wanted to laugh outright. Here was the solution of the whole mystery.

I wanted to have a triumph at the breakfast table next morning, and as a sort of preliminary I asked Mrs. "Gug" how long she had owned old Polly.

"Just about eight years," she answered. "The Professor gave him to me the month before he died. You know, he was reared in Russia—the parrot I mean—and knows more Russian words than he does English."

I could have shouted for joy. If the book of that Vognerian Tannhauser we have been listening to night after night wasn't Russian, then it wasn't anything. It was all simple enough; the patriotic bird, waking up in the night, simply rehearsed his Russian for old time's sake.

"Ladies and gentleman," I announced to the assembled boarders that morning, "I wish to say that I have, after a little difficulty, located the famous and troublesome ghost of the House of Wolfingugenthaler. Behold it in Polly Parrotski here. He was formerly a subject of the Czar, and takes out time at night to keep his Russian fresh."

As if to back up my statement the ancient bird craned his neck, rolled up his tongue, and sang out: "Thweat! Juggerty, juggerty! Boom! Pshaw! Wheeee, row-oo!"

"That's it! That's it!" shouted a dozen voices. There were cries of "Kill the bird" and "I thought once it was old Poll."

The landlady pleaded for the life of her pet, but all in vain. Each and every boarder insisted on his death, many threatening to leave the boarding house if he were not executed that very day.

"Sell him—give him away," suggested somebody.

"No, they were too altruistic; no one else should be made to suffer what they had been suffering. He must die. And so that afternoon I took old Poll down into the coal cellar, and there he met his end, protesting his innocence, in Russian, to the very last.

That night, having received my fee, I lay down in my little box bedroom under that ornate arched ceiling, expecting to enjoy at last a good night's rest.

Thwee-a-at! Juggerty, juggerty! Boom—pshaw! Row-oo, whee-oo.

I could not believe my ears. Had that parrot, whose head I had cut off in the coal cellar, appeared on the foot of my bed, descanting his Russian version of Tannhauser, the thing could not have been more incredible. My hair rose on my head; my skin broke out in goose pimples. Could it be—was it possible that it might be the Professor's ghost. The variations on the main motif were, if possible, more eerie, more fiendishly creepy, than ever before. Suddenly I let out an insane laugh. My neighbor rapped sharply on the partition.

"Don't let it get on your nerves, friend!" he shouted encouragingly. "I had a suspicion this morning that the parrot was innocent. He simply rehearsed the part well, as most any of the rest of us could do, from hearing it so often."

"What do you reckon it can be?" I asked, feeling my need of human companionship.

"Don't know," said he, and went to sleep again.

The next morning I returned my fee to the landlady.

"Old Poll was innocent," I said; "I'm sorry I killed him."

"Did the noise go on again last night?" she asked.

"It did," I said, "worse than ever."

"I don't believe it," she retorted. "I believe you are every one in a conspiracy to ruin my boarding business"—she began to weep—"and I'm going to sit up tonight myself; and if it goes on, I'll hear it."

It was agreed, and that night a little party of us held a sort of wake in the back parlor. Not a member of that little group but anticipated a triumph and looked forward to proving to the landlady that we were not a lot of hallucinated idiots. Several times the whispered arguments waxed warm; and every time the retort of the boarders was, "Wait and see!"

As the stroke of eleven died away we all strained our ears for the first notes of the overture. Nothing doing! We waited a few moments, breathlessly—still nothing!

"It doesn't usually begin till on toward half-past eleven," explained the nervous young woman, "and sometimes not till nearly twelve."

The quarter passed, the half, the three-quarters; then midnight struck, and again we leaned forward to catch the opening thweat; but not a murmur broke the stillness.

"Perhaps it was the parrot," after all," suggested one young woman. "I myself didn't hear anything last night."

"Nor I," said another.

"Nor I," said a third; then turning to me she continued: "Perhaps your nerves were overwrought, and you just dreamed you heard this thing last night. As for myself, I was planning a good night's sleep after losing so much, and I got it."

"It may have been that way," I admitted, sheepishly. I had reached that point where I could believe anything on earth about that noise.

One o'clock came and went; then two. The landlady was triumphant. "It's all imagination!" she cried. "If it weren't, why haven't I ever heard it myself. I am a very light sleeper!"

We all had to admit that it did look strange; and we went shivering to bed, feeling that that haunt had played us a mean trick. But the next night the thing was at work again. And, contrary to custom, it got busy shortly after nine o'clock, when everybody in the house was still stirring.

"Where's Mrs. Gug now," shouted some one. "Bring her up here and let's let her hear it."

"She's gone to bed," answered a servant. "After sitting up so late last night she's gone to bed early."

"Go wake her up!" we all cried.

But neither the maid nor any of the lady boarders would take it upon themselves to do our bidding, and finally I was forced to do it myself. She slept in a little box fenced in by lumber room and blind halls just over where the old organ had been. As I went down one of these passages toward her room the noise seemed to grow in intensity, and when I pushed open the door the least bit I was fairly swept off my feet by a perfect gale of sound.

"Mrs. Wolfingugenthaler!" I called above the tumult; but there was no reply and the noise seemed redoubled. I stepped inside the door and flashed my dark lantern about the room, first into all corners and then into the very face of the sleeper.

For a moment I stood spellbound with surprise and admiration; then I fell over on the floor in a fit of laughter. All this excitement—all this mystery, was caused by nothing in the world but Mrs. Wolfingugenthaler snoring. But such a snore! Say, if that woman had entered the world's international snoring contest she would have carried off first, second, and third prizes. It was half singing, half snoring, mixed with the hum and snore of a buzzsaw.

In a moment I had every boarder in the house on the scene. We all gathered just inside her door, and at a given signal, just when she was in the middle of a most atrocious run, we all shouted in chorus: "It's you! Mrs. Gug; it's you!"

That didn't convince her. She said she didn't snore; that her dear departed husband, the Professor, had told her a score of times that she did not snore. Poor man! I can believe that he died of a broken heart all right. She didn't believe that she snored; but the boarders did, and two days later they left almost in a body. The poor lady lost almost five hundred dollars, invested in second-hand furniture, and went to live with her daughter Lavinia and her son-in-law, who keep a flat at a crossing between two elevateds and three surface lines, with a steam laundry and a skating rink below, and themselves run a dancing school till the wee small hours on the floor above. And I am told that to this day the good Mrs. "Gug" insists that she does not snore.

* * *

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"What are these cups for?" asked a well-dressed man of a jeweler, pointing to some lovely silver cups on the counter.

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Gusty was 9 years old. Nature had spilled considerable fire into his make-up. His hair was red and his whole face, from his snub nose to his big ears, was spattered all over with rusty red freckles. His real name was Augustine, though every one had forgotten it; Gusty he had been from his cradle up.

There was no one to love Gusty. His father was too busy and his mother was dead. Other persons chose pretty little boys to love. Gusty took it out in being great. He could shin up a tree quicker than any other boy in school. He was always ready to wrestle with any boy who challenged him, regardless of size; his record as a fisherman was quoted in the next township, and so were his swimming feats; but most of all he gloried in baseball.

The first bat he ever had he took to bed with him. When Mrs. Stone, his great-aunt and his father's housekeeper, tried to take it away from him as he lay dreaming of future "runs" he grasped it jealously and struck out at her with a hoarse "Put her first, Billy!" If Mrs. Stone had not had a jaw of iron it would have broken; as it was, she used it with difficulty for the next three days and Gusty was forbidden all connection with baseball for one dark week.

Hartville, where Gusty lived, was a factory town of about 4,000 inhabitants. It boasted a famous baseball nine, one with which the teams in the neighboring towns were eager to compete and still more eager to score a victory over. Match games were held every Saturday on the village baseball grounds and all the men and maidens turned out to see the struggles.

Gusty never missed a game. He rarely had the fifteen-cent admission fee, but there was a tall, slim-trunked tree just outside the high board fence of the ball ground up which Gusty went like a squirrel. Here he had a full view of the field.

He sat there one Saturday in the fall. watching with great excitement a game between the Hartvilles and Northingtons. It was a contest for final yearly championship.

The Northingtons, a team of big, rough mill hands, had been promised a torch parade and a supper in the town hall on their way home if they should come back triumphant. It was the eighth inning and the score stood 2 to 2, when a dispute arose. Hartville was at the bat. Both teams and a crowd of onlookers surged about the umpires; it was finally decided in favor of the home team and the crowd drifted back into their place. Gusty, from his vantage point, saw the angry Northingtons swoop back and, as they went, a group of three or four scuffled, as though by accident, against the big sand bag that marked the third base and moved it about three feet farther from second base, where Hartville had a man.

No one noticed the trick but Gusty, whose soul was afire in an instant. He slipped nimbly down the tree and over the fence, and ran like a deer for third base. Before any one noticed him, he was standing on the sand bag shouting to the umpire to stop the game. The Northington third baseman tried to stifle him and pull him off the base, but Gusty scratched at him like a wildcat.

The crowd gathered around the two and Gusty told his story. The distance was measured and Gusty's statement found correct. The game was called off and the teams separated, with much hard feeling on both sides. Amid taunts and jeers Gusty slipped off toward home, unnoticed by all except the big Northington bully who had moved the base. He started after Gusty with an ugly scowl on his face and caught up with him just as he was passing the tree where he had watched the game.

"Hi, you young imp, thought you did a mighty smart thing spoiling our game. Think you're fine and honest, don't you? Been stealing the admission fee to the game all summer, but you draw the line at any accidental move that's going to hurt your home team. Call that fair, do you? Here's the tree where you spy out, is it? Well, up with you quicker than lightning, and I'll see that you stay there until you get enough of it."

"You will, will you?" said a new voice that set all the nerves in Gusty's body tingling with delight, and the Hartville pitcher, Gusty's hero of heroes, threw the Northington player flat and sat squarely on him. In due time apologies were made and Gusty was walking down the street side by side with his hero. When they reached the corner, where each went a different way the handsome six-footer stopped and looked down on homely, freckled little Gusty, holding out his hand in such a cordial, brotherly way that the shy, unloved youngster felt something hard in his throat.

"You're a game little chap," and the big boy gave him a friendly slap on the shoulder. "Say, aren't you the boy that catches so many fish?"

Gusty nodded.

"Well, I guess you and I will have to go into partnership. I think my mother would like to borrow you sometimes to help me eat up her crullers. You can show me where the trout bite best, and I'll teach you all I know about baseball and football."

So this is how Gusty lost his loneliness and found a big brother.

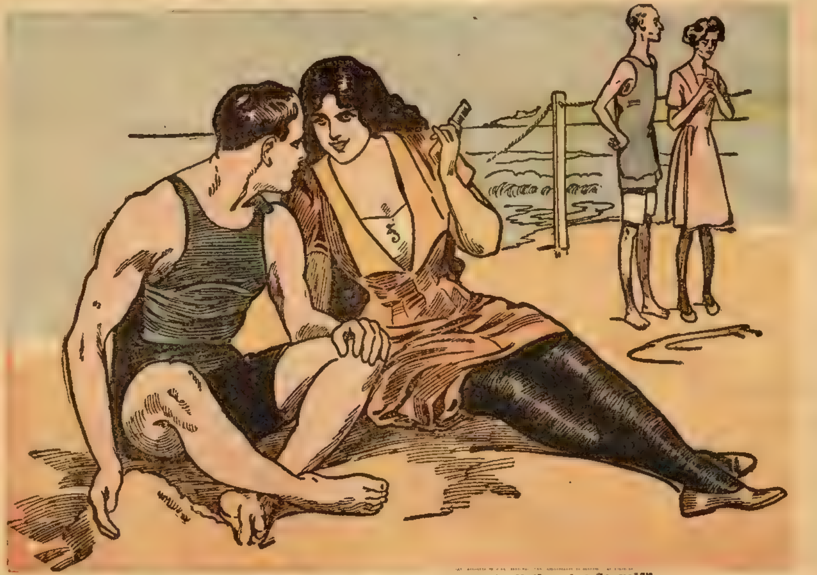
LET US MAKE YOU FAT

50-Cent Box Free!

We Will Prove at Our Own Expense That It Is No Longer Necessary to Be Thin, Scrawny and Undeveloped.

WE INVITE EVERY THIN MAN and WOMAN HERE

Every Reader of The Chicago Ledger Who is Run Down, Nervous or Underweight, to Get Fat at Our Expense.



"Gee! Look at that pair of skinny scarecrows! Why don't they try Sargol?"

This is a generous offer to every thin man or woman reader of The Chicago Ledger. We positively guarantee to increase your weight to your own satisfaction or no pay. Think this over—think what it means. At our own risk, we offer to put 10, 15, yes, 30 pounds of good, solid "stay there" flesh on your bones, to fill out hollows in cheeks, neck or bust, to get rid of that "peaked" look, to rejuvenate and revitalize your whole body until it tingles with vibrant energy; to do this without drastic diet, "tonics," severe physical culture "stunts," detention from business or any irksome requirements—if we fail it costs you nothing.

We particularly wish to hear from the excessively thin, those who know the humiliation and embarrassment which only skinny people have to suffer in silence. We want to send a free 50-cent package of our new discovery to the people who are called "slats" and "bean poles," to bony women, whose clothes never look "anyhow," no matter how expensively dressed, to the skinny men who fail to gain social or business recognition on account of their starved appearance. We care not whether you have been thin from birth, whether you have lost flesh through sickness, how many flesh builders you have experimented with. We take the risk and assume it cheerfully. If we can not put pounds and pounds of healthy flesh on your frame we don't want your money.

How can we do this? We will tell you. Science has discovered a remarkable concentrated treatment which increases cell growth, the very substance of which our bodies are made—a treatment that makes indigestion and other stomach troubles disappear as if by magic and makes an old dyspeptic or a sufferer from weak nerves or lack of vitality feel like a 2-year-old. This new treatment which has proved a boon to every thin person, is called **Sargol.** Don't forget the name—"**S-A-R-G-O-L.**" Nothing like it has ever been produced before. It is a revelation to women who have never been able to appear stylish in anything they wore because of their thinness. It is a godsend to every man who is under weight or is lacking in nerve force or energy. If you want a beautiful and well-rounded figure of symmetrical proportions, of which you can feel justly proud —if you want a body full of throbbing life and energy, write The Sargol Company, 100-X Herald Building, Binghamton, N. Y., to-day, and we will send you, absolutely free, a 50c. box of Sargol that will prove all we claim Take one with every meal, and in five minutes after you take the first concentrated tablet of this precious product it will commence to unfold its virtues, and it has by actual demonstration often increased the weight at the rate of one pound a day. But you say you want proof. Well, here you are. Here is the statement of those who have tried—who have been convinced—and who will swear to the virtues of this marvelous preparation:

WHAT SARGOL HAS DONE FOR OTHERS

When we mail you the Free 50-cent package of Sargol, we will send you copies of letters received from grateful patrons, reporting actual gains in solid healthy permanent flesh, of from ten to over thirty pounds.

We give here a few interesting figures from reports which are being received daily.

REV. GEORGE W. DAVIS says:

"I have made a faithful trial of the Sargol treatment and must say it has brought to me new life and vigor. I have gained twenty pounds and now weigh 170 pounds, and what is better, I have gained the days of my boyhood. It has been the turning point of my life. My health is now fine. I don't have to take any medicine at all and never want to again."

MRS. A. I. KOPPNHEISER writes:

"I have gained immensely since I took Sargol, for I only weighed about 106 pounds when I began using it and now I weigh 130 pounds, so really this makes 24 pounds. I feel stronger and am looking better than ever before, and now I carry rosy cheeks, which is something I could never say before

"My old friends who have been used to seeing me with a thin, long face, say that I am looking better than they have ever seen me before, and father and mother are so well pleased to think I have got to look so well and weigh so heavy for me."

[illegible] GAGNON writes

"Here is my report since taking the Sargol treatment. I am a man 67 years of age and was all run down to the very bottom. I had to quit work as I was so weak. Now, thanks to Sargol, I look like a new man. I gained 22 pounds with 26 days' treatment. I cannot tell you how happy I feel. All my clothes are getting too tight. My face has a good color and I never was so happy in my life."

C E. Crouner	**gained**	**15**	**lbs.**	**in**	**30**	**days.**
Thomas Davis	"	**10**	"	"	**16**	"
Leonore Patton	"	**16**	"	"	**30**	"
Mrs. Seim	"	**13**	"	"	**20**	"
Mrs. A. Arnott	"	**10**	"	"	**40**	"
F. A. Myrick	"	**20**	"	"	**30**	"
Philip Drapeau	"	**9**	"	"	**30**	"
Mrs. S. E. Murray	"	**30**	"	"	**40**	"
Mary Bland	"	**18**	"	"	**40**	"
W. W. Allis	"	**36**	"	"	**50**	"
Wm. Carmichael	"	**5**	"	"	**10**	"
Arthur Stewart	"	**5**	"	"	**12**	"
Mrs. C. Craig	"	**13**	"	"	**30**	"
Mrs. N. Galliger	"	**18**	"	"	**35**	"

Send to day for our free 50-cent package and let us prove that

SARGOL SHOULD DO THE SAME FOR YOU

This treatment increases the red corpuscles in the blood, strengthens the nerves and puts the digestive tract into such shape that your food is assimilated and turned into good, solid, healthy flesh instead of passing through the system undigested and unassimilated. It is a thoroughly scientific principle, this Sargol, and builds up the thin, weak and debilitated without any nauseous dosing. In many conditions it is better than cod liver oil and certainly is much pleasanter to take.

Send for the 50-cent box today. Convince us by your prompt acceptance of this offer that you are writing in good faith and really desire to gain in weight. The 50-cent package which we will send you free will be an eye-opener to you. We send it that you may see the simple, harmless nature of our new discovery, how easy it is to take, how you gain flesh privately without knowledge of friends or family until you astonish them by the prompt and unmistakable results.

We could not publish this offer in The Chicago Ledger if we were not prepared to live up to it. It is only the astounding results of our new method of treatment that make such an offer and such a guarantee possible on our part. So cut off the coupon today and mail it at once to The Sargol Company, 100-X Herald Bldg., Binghamton, N. Y., and please inclose 10c with your letter to help pay distribution expenses. Take our word, you'll never regret it.

FREE COUPON

COME FAT WITH US AT OUR EXPENSE

This coupon entitles any thin person to one 50c. package of Sargol, the concentrated Flesh Builder (provided you have never tried it), and that 10c. is enclosed to cover postage, packing, etc. Read our advertisement printed above, and then put 10c. in stamps in letter to-day, with this coupon, and the full 50c. package will be sent to you by return of post. Address: The Sargol Company, 100-X Herald Bldg., Binghamton, N. Y. Write your name and address plainly, and

PIN THIS COUPON TO YOUR LETTER

A Message of Love and Help
To all My Suffering Sisters

FREE
Price 50¢

A Full 50¢ Box of Balm of Figs Compound FREE

I speak from the heart when I say to every woman suffering from any form or description of female weakness, that I believe no other woman has been able to relieve so much physical anguish, and to restore health and strength to so many disheartened, discouraged and well nigh hopeless sisters as I have.

In the past ten years—letters of thanks, letters of praise and appreciation have poured in upon me by the thousands. They have helped and encouraged me. They have been a great satisfaction to me and have prompted me to set aside another 10,000 50c boxes of Balm of Figs Compound to send out absolutely free to my suffering sisters—to you, your daughter, your sister, your mother or any ailing friend. All you have to do is to write for one of these 50c boxes and I will send it to you without cost, all charges prepaid, no obligation on your part whatever.

Balm of Figs Compound is a remedy that has made sick women well and weak women strong—and I can prove it. Let me prove it to you by sending you this 50c box free.

I have never heard of anything that has, according to the abundance of testimonials on hand, so quickly and surely cured women's ailment's. No internal dosing necessary. It is a local treatment and has to its credit some of the most extraordinary cures on record.

If you are suffering with any form of weaknesses so common to women, write me at once for the free 50c box, as I want you to become well and strong and enjoy 365 healthy, happy days every year.

The very best test of anything is a personal trial of it and I know this 50c Box of Balm of Figs Compound will convince you of its merits—then if you are satisfied and wish to continue further, it will cost you only a few cents a week. Either fill in the coupon today or write me a letter in strictest confidence.

Mrs. Harriet M. Richards, Box F 12 Joliet, Ill.

FREE COUPON FOR 50c BOX

Mrs. Harriet M. Richards, Box F 12 Joliet, Ill.

Dear Mrs. Richards:—As I am in need of a remedy like Balm of Figs Compound, please send me—free of cost—one fifty cent box by return mail.

Name..

Address..

....

PRICE LIST SENT FREE UPON APPLICATION

RIEGER'S MONOGRAM WHISKEY
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Monogram
EXTRA
FINE
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BOTTLED BY
J. RIEGER & CO.

RIEGER'S Monogram WHISKEY

Express Prepaid

8 Full Quarts Rieger's Monogram Private Stock $5

4 Full Quarts Rieger's Monogram Extra Fine $3

FREE two sample bottles, gold tipped glass and corkscrew with every order

Over 165,000 customers have proven that our whiskey is far the best ever distilled. For smoothness and mellowness of flavor it cannot be equalled. Send remittance with order. Money refunded if whiskey is not perfectly satisfactory. Order today.

J. RIEGER & CO.
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Kansas City, Mo.

PILES CURED AT HOME BY NEW ABSORPTION METHOD.

If you suffer from bleeding, itching, blind or protruding Piles, send me your address, and I will tell you how to cure yourself at home by the new absorption treatment; and wil also send some of this home treatment free for trial, with references from your own locality if requested. Immediate relief and permanent cure assured. Send no money, but tell others of this offer Write today to Mrs. M. Summers, Box 457, South Bend, Ind.

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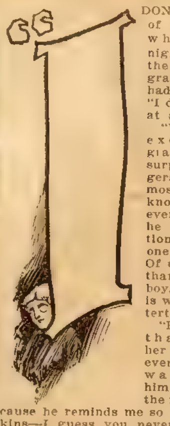
Catalog for Women in our Catalog of TOILET and NECESSARY articles. Send 2c stamp. Fairbank Supply House, 4-B, 60 Wabash, Chicago

DECLINE AND FALL.



I DON'T like that beau of yours, the one who called last night, Mertie," said the young woman's grandmother, who had come on a visit. "I don't take to him at all!"

"Why, the idea!" exclaimed her granddaughter in surprise. "Mr. Jargers is one of the most popular men I know! He's asked everywhere and if he pays any attention to a girl every one takes her up. Of course he's older than just a mere boy, but I'm sure he is well bred and entertaining and——"

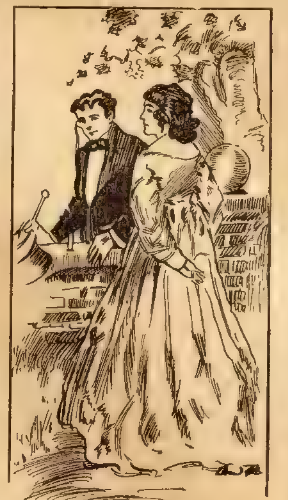
"He can be all that," interrupted her relative, "and even then I sha'n't want to welcome him as a member of the family! It's because he reminds me so of Artemus Milkins—I guess you never heard of him. Artemus was one of the best looking young men in two States and all the girls were crazy about him. They were always getting into quarrels over Artemus, and they watched one another as cats watch mice, waiting to see which way they were going to jump, because they were so afraid they'd get beaten out when it came to marrying him

"Artemus must have had wonderful endurance and a constitutional disregard for sleep, for otherwise he never could have stood up under all the dinners and dances and balls and other frivolities to which he was asked. Once when he had the grip and stayed away from a party it was just ruined, for the girls all went home early. There wasn't a house in town where the mother wasn't more than willing to sit up nights finishing her daughter's new frock if Artemus was going to take the girl anywhere.

"Naturally, after a few years, the first crowd of girls gave up and married lesser lights, but there always was a new crop of girls for Artemus to be the idol of, and, I tell you, they burned incense!

"He kept getting handsomer, too. After a girl has been out ten years she may be pretty and all that, but she hasn't the charm of youth that is so fetching. With a man it is different. A man keeps right on being good looking and popular and when they begin calling him one of the bachelors it really adds tone to him. Fancy it's adding tone to a girl when they begin referring to her as 'one of the older crowd!'

"Everybody wondered why Artemus didn't marry and settle down, but I knew it was because he was having too good a time. What's the use of tying yourself down to one slave when you can just as well have twenty or more?



"She could marry him."

"Well, for years and years Artemus was our most popular bachelor, an institution, an aggravation, a sighed for prize, an ornament to our parties. His decline was very gradual and unnoticeable. I don't think any of us noticed it for a long time after Artemus did. I presume when the tailor added five inches to the girth of his new dress suit waistband it made Artemus sit up at last and take notice and think.

"When a man thinks he grows sentimental. Artemus decided it was time for him to get married. He must have enjoyed lining up the girls and selecting the favored one, because he picked out the youngest and prettiest of that year's debutantes and very gently and kindly informed her that she could marry him You see, we heard all about these things, because nobody felt it a breach of confidence to talk about Artemus' doings.

"It must have been a shock to Artemus when Inez failed to burst into tears of joy. Inez blushed and stammered and said 'No, thank you,' in a scared way and then glided from him, giggling. That night she told Tom Flitt all about it as they sat in the hammock. Tom said, 'Why, the old donkey!' and kissed her indignantly.

"Artemus called next on Serena Phipps. Serena was 29 and popular, but inclined to be a highbrow. Artemus remembered how she had looked at him when she was 18 and he reflected that possibly his coldness had driven her to economics and social reform. When he proposed to Serena she regarded him as though he were a bug. Then she told him frankly that she wouldn't marry him because he wasn't her ideal of a man, and she was no more in love with him than she was with the weeping willow tree outside, and would he please shut the gate when he went out, so that the dogs wouldn't trample the flowerbeds.

"There were two after that, both older than Serena. Artemus seemed to decide that years might bring more appreciation of life's blessings. Neither of the two seemed to yearn for a blessing in the shape of Artemus. One of them had eyes that almost crossed, too. Her refusal must have chagrined him deeply.

"He began to look haggard and he rarely smiled. The whole procession rushed by gaily without him, and while he was in the despondent frame of mind his landlady, who was 45 and used bad grammar and had a son aged 25, married him. I think it served him right. And somehow your Mr. Jargers reminds me terribly of the Artemus kind, and I don't want——"

"There may," interrupted her granddaughter, with solemnity, "be something in what you say. I think I'll hunt up a modern Tom Flitt while there is time!"

* * *

The Taxicab Robbery.

(Continued from page twelve.)

lifted my feet over the gunwale and slid me toward the water. The brute knew that, bound hand and foot, as I was, I hadn't a chance to save myself.

But, luckily for me, the gag across my mouth caught in the rowlock and was jerked sharply away as I felt myself sink into the chilly water. I opened my mouth and yelled with all my waning strength: "Help, help, quick!"

As my face disappeared beneath the surface of the river, the last thing I beheld was Bertrandi diving far out into the water on the opposite side of the boat.

This strange story leads to very extraordinary situations and dramatic episodes. The reader will find it eminently worth reading to the end. Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of it. The surest way to get the Ledger is to subscribe for it and have it come to your home regularly. Today is a good time to attend to this.

* * *

A Professional Call.

Meredith Nicholson, the novelist, and Brand Whitlock, the mayor of Toledo, are very warm friends. Possibly their friendship is based on the attraction of opposites, for their experiences in life have been as different as could be. Whitlock is self-made; he is a good mixer and knows all sorts and conditions of men. Nicholson has never gone far from his own social circles.

Some time ago Nicholson said to Whitlock: "Brand, I envy you. You come in contact with all kinds of men. You actually know and talk to burglars and other criminals. All I know about them is what I read or imagine about them. Now the next time you meet a good burglar I want you to send him to me Give him a card to me, and tell him I will pay his car fare and expenses. I want to talk to him and see how a criminal differs from other men."

Whitlock promised to send along the next good specimen of a burglar that came his way, and forgot all about the matter until some weeks later he received this letter from Nicholson:

"Your friend came, but I had not expected him professionally. If you will tell him to bring back the family plate and Mrs. Nicholson's jewels, you and I will resume social relations."

* * *

Earned His Money.

A man, arrested for murder, bribed an Irishman on the jury with £20 to hang out for a verdict of manslaughter. The jury were out a long time, and finally came in with a verdict of manslaughter. The man rushed up to the Irish juror and said: "I'm obliged to you, my friend Did you have a hard time?"

"Yes," said the Irishman; "an awful time. The other eleven wanted to acquit yez."

You Can Get

$500 - -	1st month
$1000 - -	2nd month
$1500 - -	3rd month
$5000 - -	Altogether

A REMARKABLE INVENTION

Reader, this offer says YOU—means YOU—this money—the cold cash—can be YOURS. You and you alone by waiting too long can lose it. Be sure we hear from you first send your name and address—but NO MONEY—this very minute

You may be inexperienced or employed or without capital

—but don't worry—don't find excuses—we can and will FIX IT FOR YOU to get this money. You don't have to wait a month—not even a week—PAYMENTS CAN START THE FIRST DAY—and continue daily up to $500 first month, $5,000 for you altogether. For years we have been QUIETLY PICKING MEN from all walks of life—MINISTERS, CLERKS, FARMERS, preachers, doctors, lawyers, teachers and so on—enabling them with our co-operation and $50,000.00 APPROPRIATION to get what we here offer and can do for you—$500 first month, $5,000 altogether. Some of these men you may know—possibly have envied without understanding the reason of their prosperity.

Investigate and be amazed.

Demand absolute proof—accept no other kind. EITHER WE HAVE THE BEST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED OR WE'RE COLOSSAL LIARS. Ask Schleicher, MINISTER, whether it's true that he received

$195 twelve hours after appointment;

Langley, LIVERYMAN, $115 first day; Rasp, AGENT, $1,685 in 73 days; Beem, SOLICITOR, $164 25 weekly for 12 weeks; Korstad, FARMER, $2,212 in a few weeks; Zimmerman, FARMER, $3,856 in 30 days; Stoneman, PHOTOGRAPHER, $3,841 in 60 days; Juell, CLERK, $6,800; Hart, FARMER, $5,000; Wilson, CASHIER, $3,000 in 30 days. LET US REFER YOU to these men, to the U. S. GOVERNMENT, to banks, business houses, noted people at home and abroad Heed this caution from Chas. Starr of Mich. who writes: "Sorry this field is closed. SHOULD HAVE ACTED SOONER but was skeptical Your local man's GREAT SUCCESS HAS SET EVERYBODY TALKING and proves I was a chump. Wonderful what a man can do with a real opportunity." Then read this from Lodewick who acted quickly "LUCKY I ANSWERED AD. It's great. MONEY COMING FAST." Which will you be, Starr, a victim of "neglected opportunities" or Lodewick, the "early worm" To escape Starr's fate, send your postal this very minute—

Risk one cent to make thousands.

Ever hear of ALLEN'S WONDERFUL BATH APPARATUS? If not, listen Gives every home that long desired blessing, a modern bathroom with hot and cold running water facilities for only $6 50. No plumbing—no water works—self-heating. Only ten minutes to install. Gives cleansing plus friction, massage and shower baths in any room. Equivalent to any $200 bathroom. Over 200,000 delighted users. Used by U. S. Government

MORE REMARKABLE THAN THIS INVENTION IS OUR STARTLING PLAN OF UNIVERSAL DISTRIBUTION through special representatives who become virtually PROFIT SHARING PARTNERS in a business that's immense—exciting—fascinating — dignified — and above all, has enabled them, will enable you to get $500 FIRST MONTH, $5,000 ALTOGETHER. ASKING TO BE SHOWN DOESN'T OBLIGATE YOU ONE BIT. INVESTIGATE TODAY by all means

ALLEN MF'G. CO.,
3578 Allen Bldg., Toledo, Ohio.

WHISKEY $1.85 1 GALLON
100 PROOF

We Want 5,000 New Customers

To get these at this time of the year, we must fill the first trial order at just about cost, so here's our cut prices on 100 proof straight goods:

100 PROOF CORN - -	Gallon	$1.85
100 Proof Bourbon - - -	Gallon	2.00
100 Proof Rye - - - -	Gallon	2.25
188 Proof Alcohol - - -	Gallon	2.95

☞ If you want the express paid remit 60c extra on 1 or 2 gallons, 75c on 3 gals.

We don't sell water mixed up with whiskey. We sell 100 proof only, and if it's too strong, you can add the water to suit your own taste. Send a sample order today and address plainly as below:

RUSH DISTILLING COMPANY
Return this ad. Fort Smith, Ark.

SOLID GOLD FILLED GUARANTEED 20 YEARS $5.95

Elegant thin model, open face, 20 year gold filled (guarantee stamped in case), plain polished or engine turned, screw back and bezel, dust proof, 14 size for men or boys, fitted with 7 ruby jeweled adjusted patent lever movement, gold sunburst dial, warranted a correct timekeeper. Also Ladies' 0 size with white porcelain dial.

$5.95 VERY THIN MODEL

GOLD FILLED

StemWind & Stem Set

IF YOU SEE IT YOU WILL BUY IT. Let us send it without expense to you C. O. D. for examination at your nearest express office and if you think it a bargain and equal in appearance to any $35.00 gold filled watch pay the express agent our special sales price $6.95 and express charges and it is yours. Address MUTUAL SALES CO., B 11, Washington Blk., Chicago, Ill.

A $50 CORNET for $30

We celebrate our 46th year as the world's largest band instrument house by introducing an American made cornet that challenges the best; beautiful model; easy blowing. Send for our

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WOMEN find the right kind of Toilet Necessities, Drugs, Syringes, etc., in our catalog. Send 2c stamp for postage. F. G. FERGUSON CO., Box 59, 420 Sixth Ave., NEW YORK, N. Y.

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Stop, Read and Think

RIGHT now is a time for some mighty serious thinking—

—If you Farmers of America want to *keep* the Prosperity you *have*—and *add* to it.

The big danger is *over-confidence.*

You have had a *full meal* of Prosperity. Times are good. You are getting top prices. The Farmers' Home Market right at your door takes practically all of your products. You have no long shipments or losses in reaching distant markets.

You've a *right* to feel contented.

But don't forget about your *next meal.* Don't be caught napping.

Don't get the idea that no matter *who* is President—or *what* they do in Washington—things will go on just the same.

They Won't!

It's a mighty short step and a mighty hard fall from Good Times to Bad.

Panics and shut-down factories and tight money don't send word ahead of their coming.

The sun goes down on a land of Fat and Plenty and comes up on a Stricken Nation.

That's history. And it's not such ancient history that you don't remember it.

* * *

This is not calamity howling.

It is not crying "Wolf!" when there is no wolf.

It is just an earnest effort to warn you, who represent the farming interests of America, that your vote this November will *decide* whether or not the value of your acres and your crops will be *kept up* and *increased.*

Or whether they'll go *down* with a slump.

This is written to tell you that the "change" in administration the spellbinders are asking you to vote for *will* mean a change—

—And that change will mean quick and sure disaster to *all your interests.*

Ponder that over. And then let's consider *the proof.*

* * *

The campaign is well along.

The men who have a finger on public feeling—the men best able to judge in every party—say—either publicly or privately—that the fight has narrowed down to two candidates—

President Taft and Professor Wilson.

One thing is certain—

A vote for the Third Term Candidate is a vote for the Professor.

Please get that fixed in your mind.

Just as surely as your ballot goes in for the Bull Moose ticket, it counts one more vote for untried theories, and for the same kind of business destruction—the actual human want—that marked the last Democratic administration.

* * *

No one would reflect upon the Democratic candidate simply because he has looked upon life for so many years through the glasses of a college professor.

But as a presidential candidate, aspiring to guard the *business* welfare of ninety million people, with agricultural and industrial interests running into billions upon billions of dollars, Professor Wilson is simply and absolutely unqualified.

The needs of this country are bread and butter—not Greek and Latin—not Psychology or Metaphysics—

We want *results* not *theories.*

And the people of this country would be as unwise to put their trust in Professor Wilson as *you* would be to turn the control and management of your property over to an inexperienced dreamer who never farmed a day in his life.

Some physicians claim that they are justified in cutting to pieces a living animal—in the interest of science.

But—the people have a right to rebel against Professor Wilson's learning the *practical* things of Government, by killing American industry—cutting into its heart to find out what made it beat!

* * *

It is *actual history* that best tells you what happens to this country under a Democratic administration.

Just remember back to the conditions that existed during the Democratic period—1893-1896—when an actual experiment of Tariff for Revenue only was made.

Years of desperate hardship, loss, bankruptcy, suicides and actual starvation, years of anarchy and insurrection.

Years when banks, East, West, North and South, closed their doors in the face of thousands whose lifetime savings paid the toll of Democratic rule.

Years when business house after business house suspended, and fattened the ranks of the unemployed.

Years when hundreds of thousands of railroad men were discharged.

The three million workingmen—who were idle from 1893 to 1897—not tramps or hoodlums, mind you, but men *deprived of work*—sustained a total loss in wages of *four and one-half billion dollars*—

Nearly one and one-half times the cost of the Civil War!

And remember these were the very men who in good times consumed the farmers' products.

Figure the farmers' share of this gigantic loss.

* * *

Cobwebs formed on factory doors; mines were closed. Wages cut again and again. Strikes and riots were of everyday occurrence. Prisons were full of men driven to crime by desperate want.

Coxey's and Kelly's armies paraded the land leaving a wake of terror.

Appeal after appeal was made to boards of charity. They did all in their power, but were forced to turn thousands of deserving hunger- and cold-stricken people away.

No one will know the fearful death toll paid through the bitter winters and the sweltering summers—the thousands of men, women and little children who fought to keep soul and body together—and *failed.*

* * *

Those were heart-breaking years, and, in God's name, let us not have their like again.

Let us not plunge this happy, Prosperous nation into another siege of financial ruin, and paralyzed industry.

Your crops may be heavy—but what does that gain you without a Home Market to consume them?

What is *your* Profit if your grain is rotting in the fields, your fruit littering the ground, your live stock eating their heads off?

During the Democratic time of panic the amount of wheat consumed per person in this country fell to four bushels. It is now six and a quarter bushels. We now consume over three hundred million bushels more every year than at that time.

What advantage are big crops, when bread lines are forming everywhere—when free soup houses are supplying those who formerly were able to buy your products?

Mr. Farmer, this is no fancy picture we have drawn.

It is a photograph of the facts Professor Wilson's party would have you forget while they lull you to sleep on the brink of a precipice.

Don't listen to the glib assurance, that "It will be better next time." It will *not.*

The same *policy* of letting down the bars to foreign countries—of leaving unprotected our industrial institutions—

—Of permitting other countries to ship into America, duty free, cheaper products to compete with yours—

—*That policy* is the *slogan* of the Democratic party today—just as it was in those days of famine and misery.

"Tariff for Revenue only" they demand. For the *Government's* revenue only.

But what about YOU?

* * *

The country has never known, during a like period, a greater Prosperity than during the administration of President Taft.

In 1909 there was a government financial *deficit* of $58,735,000.

In 1911, there was a *surplus* of $47,234,000.

Which speaks volumes for the economy and wisdom of Mr. Taft's methods of political housecleaning and compact organization.

In 1897 the value of all farm products was four and one-half billion dollars, and in 1912, (estimated by U. S. Department of Agriculture) the figures reach nearly eight and one-half billions.

Farm land has doubled in value in the last ten years—but the principal increase has been during the Taft administration.

* * *

President Taft has protected Agricultural interests by his veto of the dangerous Wool and Sugar Bills.

But the greatest service his administration has done to the farmer is the making and maintaining of a Home Market.

National prosperity—mills and factories running full time, mines working extra shifts, every man who is willing to work employed, wages good—

These things—built on confidence in Taft and his policies—are what *create* the farmer's home market and uphold his land values.

* * *

Just a last word—

You are going to the polls in November to cast your vote.

There are three of the so-called leading tickets.

But only two Presidential possibilities.

Are you—remembering the former dark days of Democracy—going to risk your future Prosperity upon a *Theory* that has not been proved?

Or, are you going to grapple onto the good times that you have—the safe, sane policies that you have seen proved out?

Do you want a "change" for the mere sake of a change?

Or the surety of protection for *you* and *yours* for the next four years?

REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE,
Charles D. Hilles, Chairman
James B. Reynolds, Secretary.

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Here Boys is what you WANT. With this little instrument you can apparently see through clothes. Even the flesh turns transparent and the bones can be seen. THINK of the fun you can have with it. Sample 10 cents. J. H. PIKE, Box A, South Norwalk, Conn.

Our Boys' Corner

Rocky Mountain Perils

Or, THE BOYS WHO WON

By William Ressman Andrews

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CHAPTER IV.

THE ALERT INDIAN.

MR. CURLEY was unable to leave his bed for several days, and it looked as if it might be a matter of a few weeks before he would be well enough to get around like his old self. Therefore, it was necessary for the boys to pitch their camp near by. They found a convenient spot a quarter of a mile down the mountainside. There was another reason for getting so far away from the cave. They remembered that its existence was only known to themselves and its occupants and that all chances of some one finding out the secret must be eliminated. So they only visited Mr. Curley at stated intervals, going two at a time, and after making sure that there were no prowling Comanches around, signaling cautiously to Hiantha for admittance.

The camp was in a glade of cottonwood trees. The burros were picketed on the west side and the tents were pitched on the east side of the grove. Almost in a direct line in front of the encampment to the north was the cave's entrance hidden in the shrubbery.

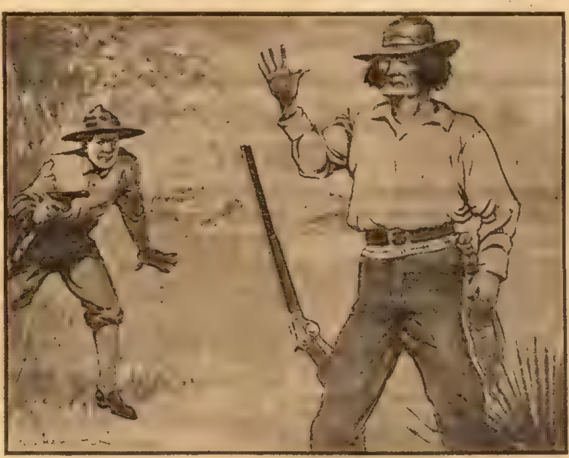
On the second day after getting settled in their quarters, the boys had an experience which for the time being kept them guessing.

Mart Reid was fishing in a mountain stream several hundred yards below the camp. He saw two black eyes peering furtively at him from the brushwood on the opposite bank. They belonged to an Indian, who instantly disappeared. The lad thought of the Comanche chief, and wondered if this could be he or one of his tribe come spying about to locate Hiantha. Mart quietly put up his fishing rod and acted like one who had made up his mind that he had enough sport for the day. By no word or sign did he let it be known that he had noted the presence of a stranger.

Once away from the bank and behind the screen of some underbrush, the lad drew from his holster an automatic pistol. He walked off without turning his head, but his ears were wide open. A hundred yards farther on he came to a clump of thick timber. Here he was able to disappear suddenly and double his tracks. He knew that the Indian all this time was stalking him. At the same time he felt that the savage would not spring upon him with the idea of putting an end to him just then. The redman would want to see where he was going and who he might intend to meet. Therefore, Mart was taking no chances. He realized the moment his eyes fell upon the savage that if he had intended to kill him he would have done so at first. Mart had been standing in an exposed position long enough for a concealed enemy to take a shot at him.

He had not long to wait. Presently he heard the faintest rustle in the bushes. Mart peered out as much as he dared. He caught a glimpse of an Indian face—the same that he had seen before. Then the man moved stealthily forward, examining the tracks the lad had made. Mart had not been able to cover up his trail the way Lew could have done. Consequently the Indian was soon near his hiding-place.

Presently he got a full view of his stalker. The man was unquestionably a full-blooded Indian, but there was nothing in the way of dress to remind Mart of a redman. He had always thought of them as going around with feathered headdresses, faces painted with yellow ochre, and red clay, and wearing all the gaudy trappings he had seen in pictures of Indian braves in their gorgeous war-paint and fighting clothes.



"Hands up!" came the sharp command.

This man had on a pair of blue overalls, an army shirt, and a well-worn felt hat. In his hand he carried a repeating rifle. He evidently had put on clothes which would render him as inconspicuous as possible. There was no less an expression of the fighting man. His face showed a settled determination to fight with somebody, and to the death.

Presently the Indian came to Mart's concealment. He raised his gun to cover the lad, but the young man was too quick for him.

"Hands up!" came the sharp command.

The words were uttered by the lad with a snap and resolution that showed the Indian that the speaker would brook no nonsense.

With a guttural oath of disgust at being taken off his guard, the newcomer promptly obeyed the lad's order. The rifle dropped to the ground and the long sunburnt arms went straight over the man's head.

"What are you following me for?" asked Mart.

"Ugh!" grunted the prisoner. He was so chagrined at the idea of being captured by a boy that he would not deign to answer.

Finally Mart's patience gave out.

"You come with me," he said. "I know somebody who will make you talk. Wait till Lew Dwyer sees you."

The only answer was another grunt of disgust. Mart made him walk on ahead toward the camp. Presently the two came in sight of the burros. A perplexed look swept over the Indian's face. And when he finally saw the rest of the boys gathered around, his usually stoical countenance relapsed into an expression of amazement.

Lew was the first to see the boy and redman come into camp. He rushed forward.

"Well, who's this, and what's he done?" questioned the young leader of the Boy Scouts.

(Continued on page twenty-nine.)

FREE Covers for School Books

School Boys who want to keep their books dry through rain or snow—who want something the other fellow hasn't got—should write for one of these patented book-covers.

Parents can cut that long school-book bill in half by protecting this year's books with a water-proof, dirt-proof cover. If so covered, the books should sell at the end of the term for half their cost price.

School Teachers can earn the thanks of the School Board by using these covers to protect school property. A superintendent in a large city writes: "They add two years to the life of a book."

To each boy who sends us his full name, street address and house number we will, upon request, send one of these covers, without charge. The covers are gifts to school boys. We do not sell them. They will fit any book six to nine inches in height. Write to

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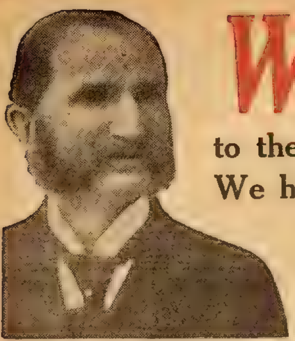
to the first person proving these letters are not absolutely genuine. We have deposited the $2,000.00 in the American State Bank of Wichita, Kansas, for that purpose. People throughout the United States and many foreign countries testify to the value of this Strange and Peculiar Remedy. Read their letters and form your own opinion. **Prof. H. Samuels Remedy Co.**



PROFESSOR SAMUELS
Scientist and Originator of Samuels' Systematic Remedy.

BRONCHITIS.

Hector, Minn., July 29, 1912.

Prof. H. Samuels Remedy Co.,
Wichita, Kas.

Dear Sir:—I am just writing to tell you that I feel fine and I am very grateful to you for the benefit your treatment has done for me. I was cured of Bronchitis of four years' standing. * * *

Many thanks to you and your wonderful treatment and may you live long to continue your great and good work, is the wishes of your patient and friend. Yours truly,

(Signed) JOHN KNUTSON,
Route 6, Box 43.

CATARRH AND BRONCHITIS.

Dumfries, Minn., July 27, 1912.

Prof. H. Samuels Remedy Co.,
Wichita, Kas

Dear Sir:—Doctors said I had Catarrh, Bronchitis and Stomach Troubles. Doctored so much but did not get any relief, but then seen the ad. of Prof. Samuels's simple treatment of putting a pure liquid in the eye and I sent for one treatment, and when I had that almost used I noticed relief and then I sent for one more, and when that was used I felt all right. From 165 pounds I went up to 19[illegible] pounds. I think that is doing good. Yours respects,

(Signed) THEO. KENNEBECK.

FEELS LIKE A NEW MAN.

Roscommon, Mich., April 25, 1911

Prof. H. Samuels.

Dear Sir:—Your letter duly received and I must say that your treatment hit the right spot and I feel like a new man and do not think I will have to have any more now for a while.

And I am thanking you ever so much for your kindness. Hoping everything may go well with you, I remain as ever,

Yours truly,
D. F. EDMONDSON.

DEAFNESS.

Bayneville, Kas., July 28, 1912.

Prof. Samuels.
Wichita, Kas.

Dear Sir:—Your letter of the 24th received. Will say in reply that I have nearly forgotten the history of my daughter's case of deafness, but that she has never been troubled since with the same, and that in all, I believe I received twenty-five letters from persons everywhere asking me to write them of your treatment, and all about our case, and I answered all but one or two. Some did not send postage and others did. I told them of your treatment, how I used them, and that I believed they cured my daughter. Yours truly,

(Signed) MRS. W. H. SCHULTE.

LUNG TROUBLE.

Woodbury, Pa., May 23, 1912.

Prof. H. Samuels.

Dear Sir:—I should have written you ere this. Hope you will pardon my delay. I am glad to tell you I am stronger and I think your medicine has done me good. My cough is about gone, sometimes I cough a little in the morning. I am not short of breath and tight on my chest like I was.

I wish you success and hope many other people will be cured by your good and wonderful treatment. I don't feel that I need any more of the medicine at present, but if I find I need any, will send at once for same.

Very respectfully yours,
MRS. WM. SIMPSON.

BRIGHT'S DISEASE.

Remus, Mich., Aug. 2, 1912.

Prof. H. Samuels.

Dear Sir:—I wish to write you these few lines for the express purpose of thanking you for your very successful treatment of my wife's sickness (namely)—Bright's Disease—we consider her entirely cured of this dread malady and can say to any person or persons desiring to benefit themselves in anything of this kind, they would do well to consult you.

We are ready and willing at any time to testify to your ability to do what you claim to do.

So with heartfelt thanks for the great good you have done, I will close. By writing myself your obedient servant.

P. F. BRADLEY,
R. F. D. 4, Box 63.

GENERAL TROUBLE.

Mineola, Tex.

Prof. H. Samuels.

I wish to let others know the great and lasting good that I derived from using your treatment. I was a perfect wreck when I started on your treatment, with but little hope of ever being well. Again I had tried every sort of medicine that was recommended and twenty-odd different doctors, and they only gave slight relief for a few days. I had Stomach and Liver trouble and Heart trouble and Nervous Prostration and Headache; in fact, I was a perfect wreck. Almost crazy at times and was taking medicine all the time, but I feel so much better I can work all the time instead of taking medicine all the time. I take pleasure in praising Prof. Samuels's treatment to everyone that I find with old chronic disease.

I thank my Lord and Prof. Samuels for the benefit that I derived from his treatment. As ever a friend,

(Signed) MRS. R. F. RHODES.

HEART TROUBLE.

Richfield Springs, N. Y., July 29, '12.

Prof. H. Samuels Remedy Co.,
Wichita, Kas.

Dear Sir:—Your letter just received. Will say that the whole people where I board are fully taken up in the cure that your medicine done for me, and right here let me say we have in our little town the very best of doctors. They did not hit my case some way. I was told in words and actions that there was no help for me. That I had chronic heart trouble. That I should not go upstairs or get up quick, as it was dangerous You know I sent for your treatment. In just one week after taking your treatment I saw my doctor. He was thunder struck to see what his medicine had done in so short a time, when I received yours. I took yours all up and feel better than I have been in five years.

Glad that you have formed a company so it will remain for all time to come. Respectfully yours,

(Signed) ANCIL THAYER.

A STRANGE AND PECULIAR REMEDY

KIDNEY AND BLADDER TROUBLE.

Augusta, Wis., July 23, 1912.

Prof. H. Samuels Remedy Co.,
Wichita, Kas.

Dear Sirs:—Prof. Samuels's medicine is all right. He helped me in two months. I had kidney and bladder trouble and rheumatism. I am feeling fine now. Have no pains now. You can recommend it to any one you wish to. This is the fourth letter I have wrote to the people asking about Samuels's eye medicine. I tell them all right. They think it is so funny to put it in the eyes.

Excuse all blunders for I am pretty old, 87 years old.

(Signed) SARAH F. McCULLOUGH.

THOUGHT HE WAS BOUND TO DIE.

Kuttawa, Ky., July 27, 1912.

Prof. H. Samuels.

Dear Sir:—I thought I would write you a few lines to let you hear from me. I am using your medicine. Oh, how proud I am. It has put me to work when I thought I was bound to die. Now I am singing my praises to the remedy. I can't say too much. The names I sent you, please write them. They need medicine. I have given your address to a great many. I will, in a short time, send after more medicine. I can't say too much for your remedy. I am here doing all I can for suffering people and I will do anything you ask me to do that is lawful.

Use my name any way you please. From,

(Signed) R. L. HUMPHREY.

INDIGESTION.

Armorel, Ark., June 26, 1912.

Prof. H. Samuels.

Dear Sir:—You may use this as a testimonial. I used two months' treatment from you and can say I received more benefit than can be reckoned.

For three years I suffered untold misery from that serpent called indigestion. I tried everything but got no relief. I had begun to think I would have to suffer to the end, but one day I read of you in a paper called "The National Rip Saw," and made up my mind that if others that had suffered even longer than I had been cured, I could be cured, too, so I sent for and used two months' treatment and now can say I can eat anything and don't feel any symptoms of its return. If I need any more medicine I know where you are.

Hoping you a long and successful life, I remain,

Your friend,
E. C. FOLK.

HEART TROUBLE AND NERVOUSNESS.

Melvina, Wis., July 28, 1912.

Prof. H. Samuels Remedy Co.,
Wichita, Kas.

Dear Prof.:—I have just received yours of the 24th, and I will state that three months ago I commenced taking your treatments for Heart trouble and Nervousness. I was not able to do anything for a number of months. I employed two of our best physicians, but their drugs done me no good, but can truly say I feel like a new woman since taking your treatments through the eye, and I gladly recommend anyone suffering from any disease to send to you for treatments through the eyes.

Once more thanking you for the great good your treatments has done me, I am,

Your grateful patient,
(Signed) MISS EUGENIA DE WITT.

P. S.—I am going to keep right on with the treatments as long as I can feel better by using it.

KIDNEY TROUBLE.

Duck River, Tenn., July 26, 1912.

Prof. Samuels.

Dear Sir:—Your letter just received and contents read. In regard to my case I had a bad kidney trouble and had tried all of the Kidney remedies that I could hear of, but got no relief until I took your treatment, which cured me.

With best wishes I am yours gratefully,
(Signed) R. T. PUCKETT.

CAN'T SAY TOO MUCH FOR IT.

Jerome, Idaho, July 22, 1912.

Dear Sir:—In regards to Prof. H. Samuels's treatment, I can't say too much for it as I am a different woman altogether. I do all of my work now.

Well this is all for this time. I remain as ever,

(Signed) MRS. ANNIE VOLKMAN.

KIDNEY AND BLADDER TROUBLE.

Blakely, Ga., R. 4, May 5, 1912.

Prof. H. Samuels.

Dear Sir:—Will drop you a few lines and let you hear from me. I am getting along fine, enjoying better health than I have for several years. I would not take a Thousand Dollars for what your medicine has done for me and risk chances again.

My kidney and bladder trouble is getting along all O. K., the neuralgia I think is going to yield all right to the treatment. I remain your true friend,

J. S. M'LINDON.

APPENDICITIS.

International Falls, Minn., June 1, '12.

Prof. H. Samuels.

Dear Sir:—I am pleased to say I am still improving. If I took the treatment four times a day as I should I believe I could move a house. I take it pretty regular but sometimes I don't take it the fourth time. I don't feel the female trouble at all and my appendix hasn't troubled me since the first week in March, and I never have to take a laxative, I feel so good I don't know how to express myself. May God bless you in your good work.

I remain,
MRS. JOHN HOEY.

GENERAL TROUBLE.

Wadley, Ga., May 31, 1912.

Prof. H. Samuels.

I will say in reply of recent date that your treatment has done for me more than all the medicine I have ever taken. I believe I would have been in my grave if I had not used your wonderful treatment. I had to take medicine all the time and hardly could live. I grew worse and weaker all the time. I could not dress or undress myself for several months before using Professor Samuels's mode of treatment.

I feel better than I have in years. I think sometimes I feel better or as well as I ever did in my life. I would not take five times what I gave for my health. Thanking you for past favors, I remain,

Respectfully yours,
MRS. E. B. SMITH.

HEART AND EYE TROUBLE.

Charleston, Miss., July 27, 1912.

Prof. H. Samuels Remedy Co.,
Wichita, Kas.

At your request I will send you a few lines regarding the benefit from your treatment. Before I commenced taking your treatment I had palpitation of the heart, and a dull weary feeling. My eyes had become so that I could not see clear a short distance. Objects seemed to be smoky and dim. Since taking two months' treatment of your remedy I can see clearer and a great deal farther. I feel well, and have gained in weight. My neighbors are astonished at my appearance. They say it is a mystery that taking a treatment through the eyes will cure disease. My eyes have been failing for several years, but your treatment has done great wonders.

Thanks to you and your great treatment, I remain,

(Signed) BETTIE DRAKE.

P. S.—You can use this as you see fit.

HEART AND STOMACH TROUBLE.

Hot Springs, S. D., July 27, 1912.

Prof. H. Samuels Remedy Co.,
Wichita, Kas.

Gentlemen:—I wish to state that I used Prof. H. Samuels's treatment through the eyes for a case of heart and stomach trouble, which I contracted while in the army in 1898, and I could not get any relief from any of the doctors with which I treated, but after using Prof. Samuels's treatment for four months there was a decided improvement, and it has not come back to bother me since I used it, about one year ago. I only weighed 110 pounds when I began its use, but weighed 135 in four months, and still feel as good. I consider that it saved my life.

I can recommend it to any one that is bothered with heart or stomach trouble. Respectfully yours,

(Signed) J. A. R. FORBES.
Box 375.

EYE TROUBLE.

Sumrall, Miss., July 29, 1912.

Prof. H. Samuels Remedy Co.

I will say in regard to your letter that I have never used a remedy that did me so much good in such a short time. My eyes were so bad I could not tell one letter from another without glasses. It cleared my eyes off so I could thread a needle without glasses. My friends were surprised. I did not use but one month's treatment.

I have received several letters from different persons asking me about your remedy, and I give it all the praise I can. Yours,

(Signed) MRS. M. J. FIVEASH,
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B. W.

Prof. H. Samuels Remedy Co., Room 113 Samuels Bldg., Wichita, Kansas

(Continued from page twenty-seven.)

"A Indian who was trailing me," responded Mart. "Can't make him talk. Think perhaps he's one of the Comanches Hiantha told us about."

At the mention of the girl's name the prisoner started. The boys noticed the effect. This seemed to confirm their suspicions. So he was one of the hated Indian tribe that had become the sworn enemies of the girl's brother for managing to keep her hidden from the Comanche chief all this time, some of the lads wondered.

Lew glanced keenly at the prisoner's features. The movement had impressed him also, but not altogether from the same cause. Lew wanted to ask the man a question, but prudence kept his tongue in check. He thought it best to wait and hear what the man might say, if he would speak at all.

The Indian acted as if he was on the point of speaking, but also checked himself. He looked around the grove and scrutinized the faces of the boys, as if wanting to make sure of their intentions, and he seemed to be trying to fathom the reason of their being in that spot.

Suddenly he looked over their heads to a figure coming toward the group. At first a shade of alarm spread over his features, then he appeared surprised, and at last, as the person got nearer and, as he noticed, walked with a confident air, his expression became one of relief.

It was Hiantha. Her face brightened at sight of the Indian. Then it darkened when she noticed that the man was a prisoner.

"Hiantha!" It was the first time the Indian spoke.

"Monkta!" exclaimed the girl, going toward him. "Back at last, my brother!"

Her brother! No wonder he had approached the cave cautiously and stalked a stranger in the vicinity when he came across Mart. The Indian had just come home after a long journey, getting the provisions for himself and his sister. He, of course, had heard nothing of the coming of the Boy Scouts, and he wanted to find out the visitors' purpose before committing himself. That's why he had refused to speak at first.

Hiantha had left the cave to see the encampment, and came at the right time. Explanations were soon made. When Monkta learned why his young captor was so alert, considering it a duty to guard the cave from intruders and to act as a protector to the Indian maiden—as all the boys felt about their protracted visit on the mountain—he expressed his gratitude in full measure.

Indeed, he had still greater occasion for expressing his gratitude later on. Lew, a week afterwards, saved his life and prevented his sister from falling into the hands of their enemies.

CHAPTER V.

A FIGHT WITH BEARS.

"What, a bear hunt!" cried the boys in delight, when Lew informed them one morning that Monkta had suggested it for their entertainment.

"Yes, we're booked to go after some black and cinnamon bears," answered the young leader.

The lads' eyes sparkled with animation. That was a sport fit for kings. Already they had visions of bringing home as trophies of their vacation several fine skins.

"Say, won't it be great?" cried Alf Reddy, throwing his sombrero in the air and letting out his school football yell as a relief to his overflowing spirits.

The camp breakfast was made short work of. Food was bolted in a hurry. The boys were anxious to get their rifles ready and start off on the hunt.

"How far is the place?" asked George Mansfield.

"Several miles from here," declared Jim Tisdale, who had been putting a lot of questions to the Indian.

He went on to explain that several miles away was a large cave which for ages had been the home of a large colony of bears, both black and cinnamon. The Indians had hunted them for ever so long. The bears had become very hard to get at. They realized that man was their natural enemy, and kept out of sight as much as possible, but when cornered they were very dangerous fighters. Preparations were soon made for the trip. It meant a long tramp, as they had decided not to ride any of the way.

"Guess we know how to hike," declared Jim. "What's the good of being a member of the Boy Scouts if we can't do our little bit of exercise."

"That's right," said one of the others. "The more we walk at our age the healthier we'll be when we get older."

As a matter of fact, Mr. Curley had substantially this idea in mind when the expedition left the city for the vacation trip. No horses were taken; only burros for carrying camp utensils, provisions, and other paraphernalia likely to be of use during the outing. The lads were not too heavy to ride the burros, if occasion made it necessary, but the animals were to be reserved for this purpose only in urgent need, in case of illness, for instance. He probably wouldn't have objected to the burros being used as mounts this once, but he didn't have to give permission or refuse. Mr. Curley's training and the esprit de corps of the Boy Scouts organization had installed in the breast of each lad a manly pride in athletic fitness and physical endurance.

The wholesome young fellows, who led clean lives, were really not on the point of undertaking something that would tax their strength. The life they had been taught to lead made them strong-limbed, deep-chested, and and hard of muscle. They were the picture of rosy-cheeked health. Their appearance showed what can be done when a boy is free from bad habits and wants to grow up a real man.

Only six could go on the hunt. One of the lads had to stay in camp and look after the burros and the party's belongings, and some one had to stay with Mr. Curley. He was almost well by this time, but he needed some one at hand, for company's sake if nothing else. Hiantha, to be sure, had been a faithful nurse during his illness, but she was scheduled for the outing. She wanted to go, but felt it her duty to remain with the convalescent. He, however, would not think of the girl sacrificing her delight in the hunt, and insisted upon her going with the others.

But who was to stay behind? That was settled by tossing up a coin, heads or tails to decide. George Mansfield had to look after camp and Frank Dunn was fated by the laws of chance to stay in the cave near the scoutmaster. Neither of the lads showed by word or sign their disappointment. A Boy Scout learns to be a philosopher and take things as they come without lamenting. So instead of wasting time and making themselves disagreeable by expressing regrets, they went cheerfully at their allotted tasks.

"I've learned another thing since joining the Boy Scouts," reflected George. "Don't be a grouch, for that kind of a lad is no use to himself or any one else." George, by his willingness, certainly showed that he had caught the spirit of this great organization.

The other members of the patrol were soon ready after this. Mr. Curley managed to come down from the cave to see them off. He hobbled along with a cane, but when he returned, after the departure of the hunters, he was obliged to mount one of the burros for the steep, uphill journey.

The five young men with their patrol leader in front stood in line like a squad of soldiers and waited for Mr. Curley to inspect them in true military style. They came to "present arms," and then as he stopped before each lad the scout brought his rifle to "inspection arms." Mr. Curley examined every piece. He wanted to make sure that the mechanism was in good order. He saw, too, that the boys had filled their bandoleers full of cartridges. He knew that they would see that everything was all right without being told. But he felt unusual responsibility when they were going to indulge in such dangerous sport as bear hunting.

Hiantha leaned gracefully on her rifle and stood by her brother, watching with interest the proceedings. Her dark eyes followed Mr. Curley, and she wondered if she would ever see again the Indian brave who had looked so much like him.

The tramp to the lair of the bears did not seem long. The stout legs of the young scouts were as fresh almost as when the trip began. They found that the bears' den was located in a thick wood at the base of a hill. The Indian told the boys to spread out and conceal themselves behind trees and brush while he went ahead.

"Heap no much good find 'em all together," he informed them. "Too muchee hug."

The redman disappeared for a while. Evidently the sight of so many ferocious creatures gathered in one place inspired him with a wholesome respect for the damage they were capable of doing when once aroused. They had come to hunt bears to be sure, but the Indian's idea was one at a time.

While he was away Lew saw a big black bear scooping wild honey from the hollow of a fallen tree. The bees buzzed angrily around the animal, making for all parts of its body. But the bear took the attack with the greatest coolness. It acted as wholly unconscious of the insects as if they were nowhere about. The bear calmly put its paw in the hollow and drew it forth heaping with the delicious sweet. Once, when a bee tried to sting the bear in the eye, it growled an angry protest. But this did not stop it from continuing to rob the thrifty bees of the food they had diligently made and hoarded up for the winter days to come, when there ceased to be clover and other wild flowers for them to sip from.

One of the boys raised his rifle to fire.

"Stop!" commanded Lew.

The rifle was lowered, and the lad looked inquiringly at his patrol leader. "What's the trouble?"

"Look over there and you will see why," answered Lew. He pointed to a big tree a dozen yards away from the hoard of honey. "There come its cubs. We don't want to kill a female. I know bears are reckoned somewhat as 'varmints' and are considered ready marks for the hunter, but I don't like to see a female killed, on principle."

Lew was not speaking without knowledge of what happens if a bear with cubs is only wounded instead of being killed outright. He knew that the rage of a bear under those circumstances is as bad as a lion's. At the same time he was aware of the fact that the boys in his patrol were crack shots. If the lad who had raised his gun had fired, he undoubtedly would have struck a vital spot with the first bullet and killed the animal. Lew beckoned to the other with him, and they stole away from the thicket where they had been watching the theft of the hive, without their presence being suspected by either mother or cubs. Suddenly a rustle was heard near

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them. Lew turned quickly. He saw the Indian girl's brother.

"I find a bear," he exclaimed softly. "Follow me."

They silently obeyed. Presently the boys were taken to a rocky hollow about four hundred yards across and fifteen feet deep. It was shaped like a bowl. Off in front of them the boys saw a small dark opening just large enough for a good-sized bear to enter.

Here was a den the Indian had found, where only one animal was making it his home. As it was the lads' first hunt after wild animals, and Mr. Curley had cautioned the redman to not take any chances of their getting maimed for life or killed, Monkta brought them here instead of to the colony.

"Mr. Bruin, he in here and give us enuff big fun," announced the Indian.

Monkta had wanted to organize a big hunt for his guests, but compromised on the one bear, after consulting with Mr. Curley before the boys started from camp. As a matter of fact, Mr. Curley hadn't liked the idea of a hunt. The Boy Scout movement was not for the purpose of making hunters or even young soldiers of the lads joining the organization, though not opposing military drill and hunting. But Mr. Curley was in a dilemma. He felt that he could not put his foot down altogether. They were under obligations to the Indian and his sister, who wanted to entertain them by organizing a hunt in their honor. Their hosts could not have done more if they were honoring an Indian chief. Mr. Curley did not want to give offense, so he consented to the hunt, but managed to eliminate as much danger as possible by suggesting that the boys try their hand at one bear.

The lads could shoot nevertheless. They had been allowed to use rifles and shotguns for some time. They had got considerable practise shooting at targets and clay pigeons. But as they were stout-hearted lads, they were willing to tackle one bear or a dozen.

As the young hunters came to the rim of the declivity they beheld a cinnamon bear in front of the cave. But before a rifle could be raised the animal, scenting danger, darted into his retreat.

The Indian gave a grunt of disappointment and started down the embankment. From the bottom he gathered an armful of faggots and dry twigs. The boys followed without comment. The Indian acted as master of ceremonies and built a fire at the mouth of the den.

"Make him sneeze," said Monkta, with a wry face at his guests, as the smoke from the twigs filled the opening.

The Indian presently went in search of more dried sticks. He was gone some time, and Lew wondered what had become of him. The lad scrambled up the hollow and followed the same direction into the woods. A little way in he beheld a sight he never dreamed of happening while he was around, though he had occasionally read of such things. The Indian was in the embrace of a bear and fighting desperately for his life.

Monkta had put down his rifle on leaving the bear's den and was armed only with a hunting knife. The enraged animal had come out of another exit to its den, and suddenly swooped down upon the Indian as he was bending over to pick up a bunch of faggots.

If he had cried out the boys would have come to his rescue in time to prevent the injuries he had now sustained. But he took his hurts with savage stoicism, hoping to see his chance to thrust the knife in a vital spot between the beast's ribs. He would have scorned to call for help—particularly from boys, while he was a grown man accustomed to the woods. So the man would probably have been killed, a few yards away, before the boys had discovered that a tragedy had happened if Lew had not begun to wonder at his absence.

A bear's vital places are protected by layers of flesh, fat and thick skin, over which is a very heavy growth of hair. An ordinary hunting knife is incapable of doing much to an animal so shielded by nature, as the man struggling with the ferocious beast knew only too well. Yet the Indian would rather fight the hopeless battle with all the odds against him than ask for aid.

Lew admired his courage, and was impressed with the specimen of the noble redman before him. It would be a pity for such a man to come to his death just through stubborn pride. Lew decided to do his best to save his gallant host. This wasn't an easy thing, either. The huge bear was swaying from side to side, and its victim struggled violently to get free from the terrible embrace of its big paws studded with long curved nails that tore Monkta's clothing to shreds. Blood was streaming from deep scratches on the brave fellow's back.

Lew promptly brought his rifle to the hollow of his shoulder and drew a bead on the bear. But he did not dare fire right away on account of the lurching movements of the man and the animal. He did not know but the moment he pulled the trigger, expecting to strike one of the few vital spots on the bear, that the man might suddenly be brought within range of the muzzle.

Lew's heart sank at the thought of this danger. Yet he had to take a chance. Monkta certainly could not escape death while the bear lived. The rifle was kept on a line with the contestants, the lad's finger ready to release the hammer on the deadly cartridge.

The boys came running in response to his call to Monkta. He asked the Indian to try to remain still a second if possible. Thus warned of help he obeyed. His sudden cessation of movements had a peculiar effect on the bear. He stopped in surprise for a second to see what had made his victim act so queerly. That gave Lew the chance he was looking for. It was now or never. Not only must he hit, but he had to make sure of a vulnerable spot. Many a bear has been shot at dozens of times, and survived with all the bullets in his hide. The pain only increased his rage and made him more dangerous, but bruin was a long way from the graveyard.

Lew knew that to be perfectly sure of killing the bear instantly, and thereby making certain of saving Monkta from death, he had to pierce the animal's brain through the eye. Now while a bear's body is very large and makes a big target, his eye is very small for such a big beast. Was Lew equal to the task? The question flashed to his mind. If ever he needed use of the crack marksmanship he had displayed in amateur contests, the steady hand and cool brain he was noted for, he needed them now. There's a big difference whether you are shooting for prizes or to save a human life. But the lad was undaunted after the first awful feeling of responsibility that would affect any one under the same circumstances. He remembered that he was a Boy Scout and he must live up to the code of the organization—"be prepared for emergencies and always render assistance."

Crack! crack! Two shots coming so close together that they might have sounded to an unpractised ear like one, rent the air of the wilderness. It sounded louder than it really was to the group of anxious watchers lined up behind their patrol leader. Lew's rifle had spoken, but for a second he wondered whether it had sent its death message. He had fired twice. Something had told him there was time, and he wanted to make doubly sure.

The bear did not drop immediately. The lad half expected to see its huge hulking body collapse the moment he fired, if his aim had proved effective. When he did not see it fall at once his heart sank. He thought that the animal, merely pained by the wounds he had managed to inflict, would grasp Monkta in its powerful paws and crush the man in a last terrible embrace. But just as Lew felt that he had failed the huge animal swayed. Then with a mighty crash it fell to the ground in a heap. Monkta, quick to take advantage, threw himself back and away from the bear.

Lew rushed up. A glance at the cinnamon showed that the two bullets had killed it instantly. He bent over the Indian and saw that he was badly scratched and scraped by the murderous claws.

"Where's the first-aid kit?" called Lew over his shoulder. One of the scouts had already opened its flap and was taking out bandages, soothing ointments, and other things that Lew might need to dress the unfortunate man's wounds.

The Indian showed the fortitude of his race by not making a sound, although he was suffering from painful wounds. Fortunately, he had not received dangerous hurts, and was able to go back to his cave without its being necessary to delay by sending for one of the burros to carry him.

During all this excitement no one thought of Hiantha. She had disappeared. Not until Lew had dressed her brother's wounds did he notice her absence. This seemed strange. He supposed that such a devoted sister would have been the first to rush to him after his release.

The conclusion of this highly interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. Read it. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year.

* * *

Tough Job.

"That job of mine is awful tough," said the red-headed office boy, slumping down dejectedly. He reached for a piece of pie on the quick lunch counter, while his friend of an adjoining office peeled an orange.

"All jobs is tough," commented the other boy.

"You bet," agreed the injured one. "I ain't done a thing this mornin' but he hollered at somethin' fierce."

"What's he jumpin' on you now fer?" inquired the other boy, with growing interest. "Some extry kick, or just th' regular grouch like all bosses has?"

The red-headed boy shook his head gloomily. "Extry kick this time," he said, "an' all over nothin' too. You know yerself how they're always poundin' it into a feller that he ain't to let in them book agents an' irrigated land sharps an' guys without an appointment, an' all that?"

"Sure," said the other boy.

"Well," went on the aggrieved one, "at a quarter t' 'leven this mornin' a gent walks into th' office an' asks fer th' boss. He's a long guy with a sort o' grin in his eye, an' before I knowed what I was doin' I'd showed him into the boss' private office, an' tells him the boss is out, but fer him to wait. The gent says 'Much obliged' an' sits down comfortable, an' pulls a book out of his pocket.

"Then o' course it hits me what a fool trick I done in showin' him in there. So I fusses around outside, figurin' out what I oughta do about it. Pretty soon I goes in an' finds the feller readin' his book. 'Excuse me, mister,' I says. 'I'll show you into Mr. Simms' office. That's the boss' secretary.'

" 'All right,' says the gent, feal pleasant, 'just as you please. Cleanin' day in here?'

" 'Nope,' says I. But I shows him into Simms' office, that joins the boss'. Then I fusses around some more in the waitin' room, an' after awhile I thinks to myself that just as likely as not the boss is goin' to fire me for lettin' that guy in here at all, so I walks in again.

" 'I hope you'll excuse me, mister,' I says. 'The boss is likely to come in any time an' I wisht you'd just step into Mis' Adams' room.'

"The feller sets an' looks at me fer a minute an' his face gets solemn.

" 'Shall I not be—er—inconveniencin' the lady?' says he.

" 'Nope,' says I. 'She's out to lunch.'

"So he gets up an' follers me into th' s'nographer's room, an' I lets him set there—me expectin' to get called down fer it at that. An' then all of a sudden I think to myself how Mis' Adams leaves her rubbers an' her pocketbook lyin' around loose half th' time, an' how suspicious th' boss is. I know this here guy ain't no thief, but I'm feelin' despirt, so in I goes an' braces up to him again.

" 'I hope you'll excuse me, mister,' I says. 'Y'understand how it is, but we've been missin' inkstands an' paperweights around here lately an' I wisht you'd let me show you into the waitin'-room, where it's nice an' warm,' I says, to be polite.

"The gent don't say a word, but he begins to cough, violent. He gets up an' follers me into the outside office, an' just then in walks th' boss an' he jumps over an' shakes th' gent by th' hand an' leads him into his private room. An' pretty soon I hears th' long guy in there roar out laughin' fit to bust."

The red-headed boy swallowed the last of his pie with a gulp. "An' then," he ended briefly, "after all my trouble the boss comes out in half an hour an' jaws me because the long gent was one of our best customers. The boss called me a red head, too," he added, "an' me hair ain't red. Me sister sez it's awburn!"

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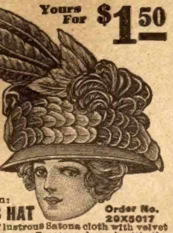

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The Diamond Mouse.

(Continued from page five.)

transgression, and the document he held was a free and unequivocal pardon. Then it was that the little minister lifted his eyes heavenward, and his face assumed an expression it had not known for years.

The old year passed, and the snows of the new year covered the ground like a seraph's pinions. There were many lights in Ravenswood. From far and near came the gentry of the Old Dominion, belles and beaux of radiant forms and beauty, and Estelle, dressed in her bridal robes, had a smile for all.

Already Graystone, with its secret places, was a heap of ruins, for the fire fiend had licked up the last vestige of its habitation, and buried in Halco's bosom was the origin of its doom.

"Come with me to the river," said Estelle, one twilight, to her husband, and they went down the winding path together, Sylvan watching her in silence.

She led the way to the water's edge.

"Sylvan, my love," said she, with a glance into his glowing face, "here ends forever the curse of the Diamond Mouse."

As she concluded her hand slipped from her bosom, and something glittered in the rich moonlight which fell about them.

"Look!" she exclaimed, opening her hand. "Behold for the last time the Curse of Culloden."

"Farewell forever," spoke Estelle in low tones, as her hand was lifted above her head. "Ravenswood shall not know thee more."

The object which shot outward from her grasp caught the light for the last time, and as Sylvan watched the waters that closed over the Diamond Mouse he caught her to his bosom and imprinted love's kiss upon her crimson lips.

The End.

* * *

A Royal Victim.

Richard the lion-hearted, King of England, dying of an arrow shot as he besieged a castle in Limousin, on his deathbed declared his brother John to be his heir. By right of primogeniture, however, the throne belonged to the youthful Arthur, the son of John's elder brother Geoffrey, Duke of Brittany. The boy was born in 1187.

John seized the throne of England. In France Arthur's claims were at first upheld. Anjou, Poitou and Touraine, three important French provinces, weary of English domination, declared for Arthur and invoked the protection of the French King, Philip II. The prospects of little Arthur looked bright until, in the year 1200, King Philip abandoned Arthur's cause when John won him over with a disgraceful treaty.

Arthur had been accepted at his birth by the Bretons as a liberator and avenger; Eleanor, widow of Henry II, held out against her grandson in favor of her son John, and for the unity of the English realm, which the accession of Arthur would have divided. Arthur rose against his grandmother and besieged her in Mirebeau. It was nothing new in this family to see children armed against their parents. John came to his mother's rescue, defeated Arthur and took him captive with most of the great lords of his party. It is supposed that John imprisoned his nephew first at Falaise and afterward at Rouen. "Arthur disappeared," writes Matthew Paris, "and God grant that it may not have been as malicious rumor reports."

King Philip's chaplain, afterward writing as if he had been an eye-witness of the scene, states that King John took the hapless Arthur out in a boat, stabbed him twice with a dagger and then threw the boy into the river three miles from the castle of Rouen. The Bretons have laid the scene of the tragedy in their own country near Cherbourg.

* * *

Legislature Ethics.

A certain saloonkeeper years ago was elected to the Legislature of a Southern State at a time when there was important legislation pending. He accepted a thousand dollars for his vote on a certain measure. The deal was hardly closed when the opposition came round, offering him two thousand. The temptation was strong, but the new member shook his head.

"No gentleman, as is a gentleman," he said, "will sell out twicet on wan proposition!"

* * *

Practical Tommy.

No man would have dared to accuse Tommy of a lack of patriotism, yet——

"Tommy," said the teacher, "tell us what you would think if you saw the Stars and Stripes waving over the field of battle?"

"I should think," replied Thomas, "that the wind was blowing."

* * *

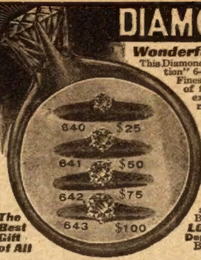
His Position.

Neighbor—"They tell me your son is in the college eleven."

Proud Mother—"Yes, indeed."

Neighbor—"Do you know what position he plays?"

Proud Mother—"I ain't sure, but I think he's one of the drawbacks."



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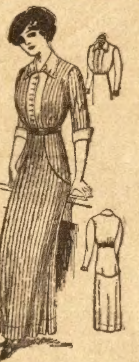
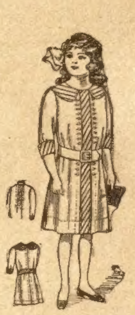
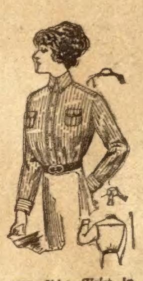


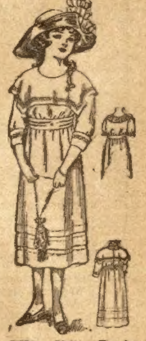
7592 Semi-Princesse Gown, 34 to 42 bust.



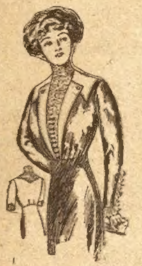
7591 Girl's Dress, 6 to 12 years.



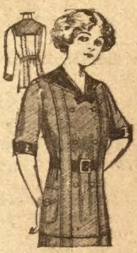
7583 Shirt Waist in Mannish Style, 34 to 42 bust.



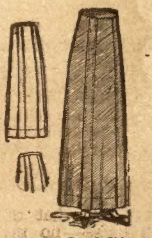
7576 Girl's Empire Dress, 8 to 14 years.



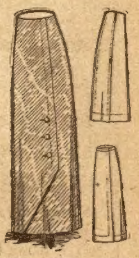
7578 Fancy Waist, 36 to 46 bu[illegible]



7579 Norfolk Blouse for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.



7580 Six Gored Skirt for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.



7596 Five Gored Skirt, 22 to 32 waist.

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Should you use as much as one-half of each package in making the trial, it will be entirely satisfactory to us.

Now, reader, that Guarantee is *plain* and *specific*. It means just what it says. If we can't please you with our groceries then we *will* please you by paying the entire cost of trial.

And, *remember*—Larkin Co.'s Guarantee is as good as a National Bank Note. Back of it is a record of 37 years of faithful service to 2,000,000 customers. On every sale the reputation of a great business is at stake. If your order amounted to $10,000 Larkin Co. would not keep a penny of it *unless they knew you were pleased and satisfied*. Now let us tell you how we can, and do, offer you these amazing grocery bargains.

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Our ability to buy raw materials and manufacture goods at low cost, together with the great buying capacity of our grocery department, is what makes these prices possible.

We Are Big Manufacturers

Larkin Co. is one of the largest manufacturing and distributing concerns in America.

You know us. You have heard of the "Larkin Idea." You or your friends have no doubt already done business with us.

Our business, after 37 years, has reached a huge volume, with 2,000,000 customers.

Every month we buy literally *millions* of dollars' worth of *raw* materials.

Buying in such huge quantities, for spot cash, we secure price concessions such as few manufacturers can ever hope to get. How could a retail grocer or even a *wholesale* grocer ever expect to compete with a big manufacturer?

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We manufacture and sell groceries and, in addition, a great many other products.

Those that we can not manufacture to best advantage in our own great factories we buy in immense quantities from other manufacturers and sell to you at but a trifle above the manufacturing cost.

We know no better way to advertise our *entire* business than to feature one *department*—our groceries. Everybody uses groceries.

Some we are forced to sell at times at less than cost, in order to make good our promises.

Remember, too, ours is a factory-to-family business. No jobbers, no wholesalers, no retailers draw profit on groceries you get from Larkin Co.

And our bargains are offered not once in a while, but *every day*.

Think of buying single packages at other factories! Why, even dealers can't do it at most factories, for the only quantities that most factories will sell are too large for anyone but jobbers.

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We can give no premiums with groceries.

We give you your extra values here in the form of almost double the amount of groceries for each dollar spent.

Selling $8 Worth of Groceries for $5

Here is an example of what many a woman saves by spending $5 for Larkin groceries:

	Our price	Usual price
½ lb. imported tea, choicest growth	$0.17½	$0.35
1 lb. superior cup-quality coffee	.26	.35
2 lbs. roasted cereal	.15	.30
½ lb. Phosphate baking powder	07½	.15
2 packages gelatine	.10	.20
5-lb. pkg. fancy table salt	.05	.10
2 oz. double strength flavoring extract	.10	.20
49 lbs. highest grade Patent Spring Wheat Flour, milled from choicest No. 1 hard wheat	1.45	1 80
5 lbs. fancy rice	.30	.50
3-lb. can choicest tomatoes	.10	.15
2 5-oz. cans Cove oysters	.16	.20
2 3-lb. cans apricots	.40	.60
1-lb. package Boraxine Soap Powder	.05	.10
10 bars Sweet Home Family Soap	.25	.50
3 lbs. Gloss Starch	.12½	.25
1-lb. can lye	.05	.10
1 lb. assorted chocolates	.30	.60
2½-lb. can Lemon Cling peaches (fancy)	.22	.35
2½-lb. can California pears (fancy)	.23	.35
1 can pork and beans with tomato sauce	.07½	.15
2-lb. can young sweet corn	.09	.15
¼ lb. chocolate	.06	.12
1-pint jar Queen olives	.20	.35
1 package allspice	.03	.05
	$5.00	$7.97

But You Must Help Us

Now, we can not conduct a grocery business very long on this cut-price basis without your help.

We must do close to a million dollars' cash grocery business a month or sharply advance these prices.

So we ask your help.

Send us one trial order.

That's all we want—*just one trial order.*

We will never *need* to ask you to buy groceries here again. For we know that no housewife, when once she has found an easy way to save almost half on her grocery bills, would be so foolish as to abandon it.

After trying our groceries, please tell your friends what you have discovered.

Send Coupon or Postal for Grocery Book of 200 Bargains

We can't describe and price on this page one-tenth of our Grocery Bargains. You must send for our book of Grocery Bargains to really appreciate what we are doing. This book is like a sanitary grocery store where coffee, tea, sugar, canned vegetables, etc., all in clean packages, free from dust and flies, are all greatly underpriced. Like a big grocery, not 5 or 10 miles from you, but a grocery brought *right to your house*, where you can do your buying at the most convenient moment. *We guarantee SAFE, QUICK delivery on all orders. And under our plan your freight amounts to practically NOTHING (Not over 5%).*

Won't you send *now* for the Book? It will do you good to see our goods and our prices.

Send the coupon, or write this on a postal: "*Send me your Grocery Book.*" Then add your name and address and mail to Larkin Co., Dept. 14 Buffalo, N. Y. The Book will reach your home by return mail.

(1) **Larkin Co.**
Dept. 14
Buffalo, N. Y.

Fill Out and Mail Now!

Grocery Book Coupon

Larkin Co., Dept. 14 Buffalo, N. Y.

Please send me your latest book of Grocery Bargains.

Name..

Post Office..

R. F. D..................... *State*....................